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AND

THE TESTIMONY WHICH COMPELLED IT

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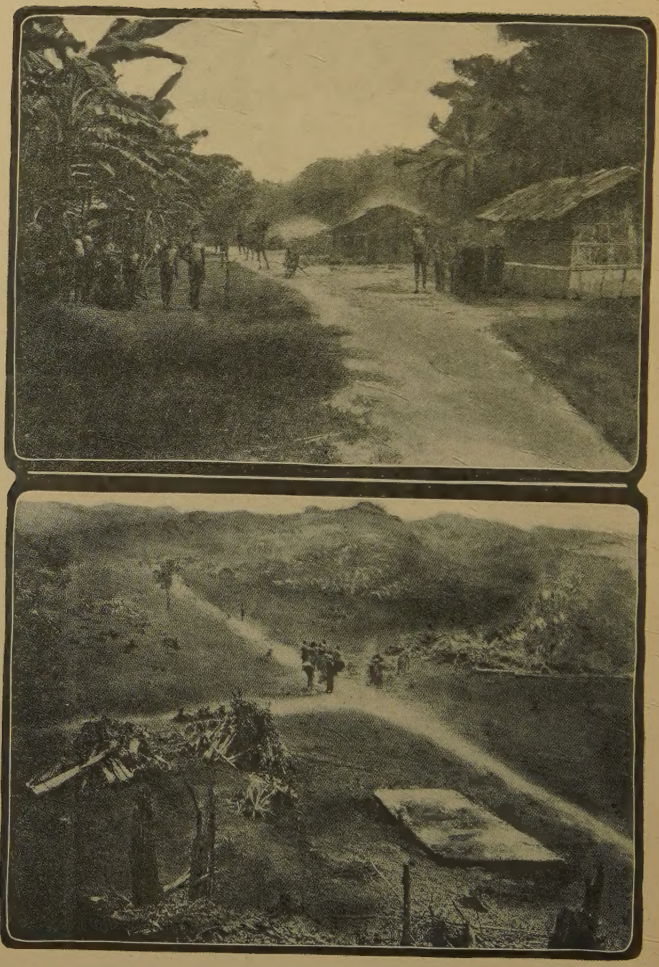

The Village of Lungundo before and after the work of State Agents.

THE INDICTMENT

AGAINST THE

CONGO GOVERNMENT

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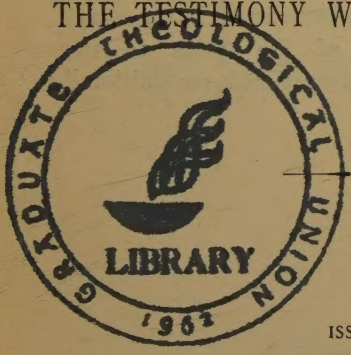

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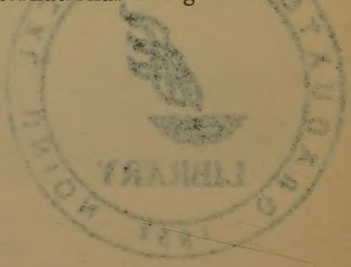
"The Congo Reform Association, as at first constituted, did not make or endorse accusation against the administration of the Congo State; it asked simply that current reports of conditions in that State should have an impartial investigation. The report now made by the Commission appointed by Leopold II concedes the prevalence of shocking wrongs. The Association therefore asks that international action shall be taken with a view to authoritative adjudication of the policy to which these atrocities are directly traceable,—the king's claim to personal ownership of the vast territory and its products, and his employment of force for collection of these products. It seeks also, through international action, the adoption of such measures as shall ensure immediate deliverance for this oppressed people and the restoration of the State to the purposes represented in its international recognition."



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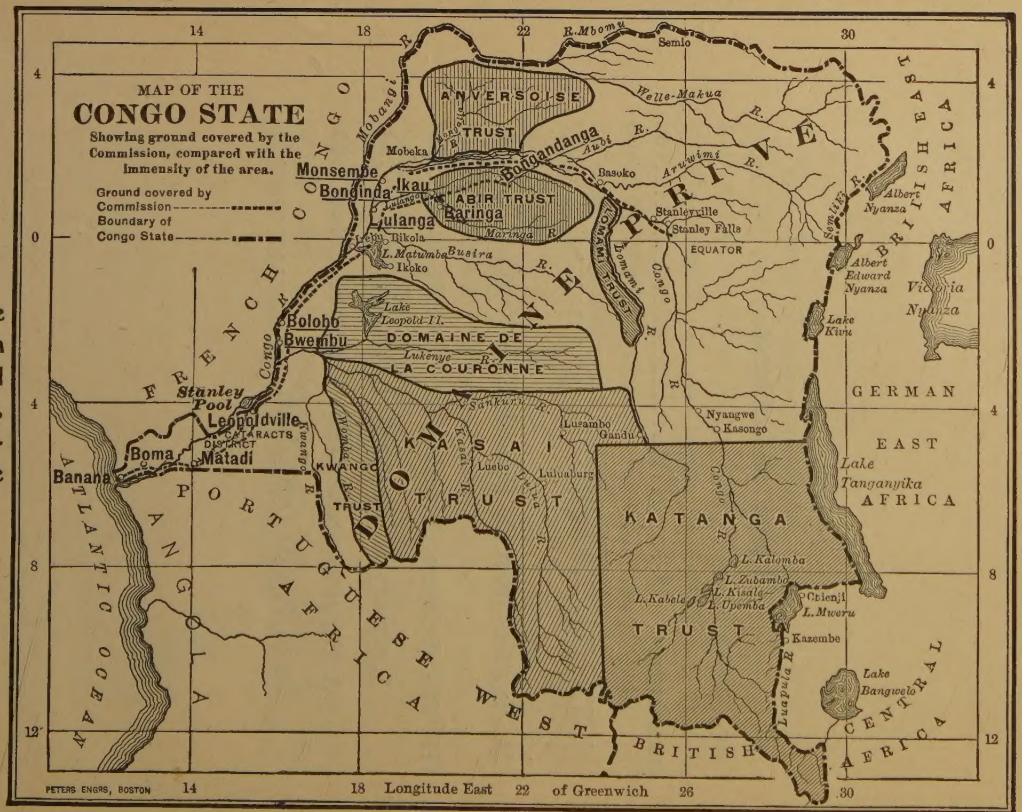
The Domaine Prive, in which all general trade is extinct, includes all territory above Stanley Pool.



The Domaine de la Couronne (112,000 sq. miles) is a secret revenue district controlled by the king.

Area of Congo State, upwards of 900,000 sq. miles. Area of Trusts 11,000 to 193,000 sq. miles. A few other Trusts are not clearly defined in official papers. The Report of the Commission states: "In exchange for the right of exploitation which it concedes, the State receives a considerable part (often the half) of the stock of the company."

Introductory

The publication of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry marks the beginning of a new era in the movement for deliverance of the people of the Congo State. The period of doubt and wholesale denial is ended. The facts are officially conceded. The enterprise undertaken by Leopold II with elaborate protestations of disinterested and benevolent intentions has resulted in bringing upon the people of the Congo territory wrongs too dreadful to contemplate. For all who have responsibility of power or influence in the determination of the future lot of this people, the present hour is a time for serious reflection and resolute action. The king meets the new situation with the same virtuous protestations made when his great trust was committed to him. The question demanding decision is whether the rooting out of the hideous abuses shall be left subject to the independent will of the ruler under whose administration these wrongs have been committed.

The aim in view in this pamphlet is to give representative extracts from the Commission's Report and to supplement these by citations from the evidence laid before the Commission. The illuminating article which we copy from The Contemporary Review calls attention to a grave defect of the Commission's Report, the suppression of the testimony upon which its findings are based. The contrast in this respect between this report and that made by the British Consul, Mr. Casement, after his tour of investigation in the Congo territory, is marked. The reader of the Report of the Commission

is unable to judge of the correctness or adequacy of the conclusions reached. Fortunately the testimony suppressed in this Report has been made available, in written statements prepared by those who appeared before the Commission. We derive also from the same source testimony as to conditions subsequent to the stay of the Commission in the territory visited. Our readers will thus be able to form their own opinion as to the outlook for the future should the present rule be suffered to continue.

Three points are of interest in a study of conditions in the Congo State as disclosed in this Report. First, the nature of the facts. As to this the Report is definite, and the import of the testimony, as reproduced in these pages, is unmistakable. Second, the determining of responsibility for the wrongs. With this vitally important issue the Commission was hardly fitted to deal and the Report says little regarding it.* Certain things, however, are made plain in the Report. The facts were so readily ascertainable that they became known to the Commission in a brief visit. Cruelly oppressive conditions, threatening the extermination of the people, were found at a point relatively so near and so well known as Leopoldville; and the testimony given by witnesses at its hearings is declared by the Commission to have been in all essential respects a reproduction of official records.** Moreover it is well known that the facts now reported were made known long ago by a great company of missionaries and travelers and by a consular representative. If it were possible to suppose the king free from direct responsibility for the iniquitous conditions now reported by his Commission, he must still be adjudged guilty of a criminal negligence involving an incredible infidelity to

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*See statement of Commission, p. 43.

**"The Judicial dossiers of prosecutions, the political reports, official correspondence of magistrates, copies of letters of commercial companies; these things furnished to the Commission elements of appreciation which contributed to a far greater degree to form its conclusions than many depositions."—Report of Commission.

the great trust committed to him in the persons of these millions of defenseless fellow-beings. When it is borne in mind that the administration of the king is conspicuously an individual rule,* that his knowledge of the details of administration in the Congo State has been a marvel to all informed as to his methods of government, that officials found guilty of atrocities have repeatedly said that they were carrying out a well-understood policy, the measure of the king's culpability is more fully disclosed.

A third point of vital interest relates to possible remedies for existing conditions. The article which follows this introductory note refers forcibly to the lack of every essential guarantee of genuine and effective reform; one fatal fault in the Report, considered as a remedial document, is instanced, the proposed continuance of forced labor for development of the resources of the State. It should also be definitely recognized that a radical vitiation of the Report is found in its failure to adjudge the fundamental policy controlling the king's administration,—his claim to personal ownership of all territory and products. Obviously it does not fall within the province of the Commission, under its appointment by the king, to deal with this issue;** but this limitation robs that body of any power to ordain true reforms, for to this fundamental crime, by which the rights of the natives were extinguished and the world's rights in trade were abolished, the wrongs reported by the Commission are directly traceable. Indeed, the issue thus raised is one of momentous importance irrespective of the wrongs now crying for redress. The question at stake is one of commanding moral and political interest: May the ruler of a State appropriate for his personal aggrandizement the land and products and all the emoluments of a vast national

*"Leopold II. is the absolute master of the whole of the internal and external activity of the Independent State of the Congo. The organization of justice, the army, the industrial and commercial regimes are established solely by himself."—M. Cattier, Brussels University.

**See statement of Commission, p. 43.

territory, thereby closing the door of trade against its own people and against the peoples of other lands? The memorial addressed to Congress by missionary societies, in April, 1904, well says, "If the coming together of the Powers were not demanded for inquiry into the reported abuses, it would seem amply justified by necessity for international judgment upon this astounding claim represented by the government of the Independent State of the Congo." The need is urgent that deliberate and resolute action shall put upon this theory the stamp of international disapprobation and abhorrence.

The call for immediate action by the Powers responsible for the creation of the Congo State plainly is imperative. That the present crisis should carelessly be suffered to pass without authoritative action by the constituted guardians of this international territory, and that a hapless people should thus again be subjected to the fearful risk involved in continuance of the present rule, would leave upon the civilization of the Western world a reproach heavier than it should be willing to bear.

I. The Case Reviewed

From "The Congo State and The Commission of Inquiry," by Herbert Samuel, M.P., in Contemporary Review, December, 1905.*

"The Congo Free State is one of the largest territories under a single government now existing in the world. Its area is equal to that of all the countries of Western Europe combined. Yet this vast portion of the earth's surface is held as personal property by one individual, and is administered by him on much the same principles as a landowner might administer a private estate. Uncontrolled, as Sovereign of the Congo, by any Parliament, too powerful to care for the murmurings of the unarmed and unorganized millions over whom he rules, Leopold II may say, even more truly than Louis XIV, 'l'Etat, c'est moi.'

"King Leopold's position, however, was the creation of the great Powers, and to the Powers he is responsible for the results of his government. The moving spirit of an Association, ostensibly scientific and philanthropic, which had been formed to explore the basin of the Congo, King Leopold, without the recognition of the great nations, could no more have become the sovereign of a vast portion of those domains than M. Max Lebaudy, without that recognition, could become Emperor of the Sahara. One by one, in the years 1884 and 1885, the Powers were induced to recognize the flag of the State he was endeavoring to create. But their sanction was not without conditions. In the

*This article is reproduced as presenting a succinct review of the development of existing conditions with a discriminating estimate of the Report.

AT THE BERLIN CONFERENCE

General Act passed by the Conference of all the Governments interested in Africa, which was then meeting in Berlin, those conditions were clearly stated. It was declared that all the Powers exercising sovereign rights or influence in the basin of the Congo "pledge themselves to watch over the preservation of the native populations and the improvement of their moral and material conditions of existence." It was declared also that none "shall be allowed to grant therein either monopoly or privilege of any kind in commercial matters," and further, that "the trade of all nations shall enjoy complete freedom." The representative of King Leopold, admitted to the last sitting of the Conference, set his signature to these terms. The Conference separated, convinced that it had secured the future well-being of the natives by entrusting their rule to a sovereign whose written pledge of good government was rendered almost superfluous by the declared benevolence of his intentions. "The founders of the State," said Sir Edward Malet, the British delegate, are dominated by a purely philanthropic idea." Prince Bismarck, who presided at the concluding meeting, said, "I pay homage to the noble efforts of His Majesty the King of the Belgians, the founder of a work now recognized by nearly all the Powers, the consolidation of which should confer precious services on the cause of humanity. . . . I pray for its prosperous development and for the fulfilment of the noble aspirations of its founder." The world awaited the outcome with hopefulness and philanthropists with enthusiasm. "Our only programme," King Leopold declared, "is the work of moral and material regeneration."

"The State firmly established, it was not long before these high professions were thrown to the winds, and the guarantees given at Berlin openly violated. A royal decree declared the whole of the 900,000 square miles of land included within the boundaries of the State, with the exception of a fraction near the mouth of the Congo and the actual sites of the native villages,

WHOLESALE VIOLATION OF PLEDGES

to be the property of the Government—that is, of the King. Since the land was his property, so also were its fruits. In the greater part of the territory the sole right to purchase these was conferred on a number of concessionaire companies, in which the State—in other words the King—held a portion, usually half, of the shares, and was to receive a corresponding proportion of the profits. The Government which had pledged itself not to grant "either monopoly or privilege of any kind in commercial matters" now declared in so many words that anyone, other than the agents of the concessionaire companies or of the State, who bought from the natives rubber, or ivory, or other product of the forest, was "a receiver of stolen goods." And the natives—for whose sake, it had been declared, the State had come into being—were prohibited on the one hand, from selling their produce to the highest bidder, while, on the other hand, they were compelled to bring it in specified quantities to the agents of the State or the monopolist companies. A system of forced labor was established by law. Commercial agents fixed at their pleasure the quota of rubber, or gum copal, or timber, or food stuffs, that each village was to bring fortnightly to the trading posts. Sometimes a payment of nominal amount was given in return, sometimes the goods received were styled taxes and not even a pretence of payment was made. "The natives," said the Belgian Premier, M. Smet de Naeyer, in a debate in the Belgian Chamber two years ago, "are not entitled to anything; what is given to them is a pure gratuity." Throughout almost the whole of the Congo Free State commerce was suppressed as the means of economic development, and compulsion established as its substitute.

"In the centres of districts were stationed agents—often men of inferior character, wholly unsuited to exercise authority over uncivilized peoples. In the villages were stationed "sentries," one or two in each place, whose duty it was to see that the fortnightly tale

RESULTS TO THE NATIVES AND TO THE KING

of produce was collected. These sentries, usually savages brought from other districts, armed in the midst of an unarmed population, having all the resources of the village at their disposal and the lives of its inhabitants at their command, protected from attack by the power of the white man but too distant from the white man to be under his control, these sentries soon became the most terrible sources of oppression that imagination can conceive. The tale of their doings will always stand as one of the most tragic chapters in all the dark history of the dark continent.

"If the demands for rubber, or other produce, were not satisfied, the people at fault were flogged, often most barbarously, with a thong of twisted hippopotamus-hide called the "chicotte." Or else the natives were told to catch the women from the offending village, who were brought to the "chef de poste" and imprisoned by him as hostages for the industry of their husbands. Or else the sentries shot some of the defaulters as examples to the rest. Frequently there were armed expeditions into refractory districts and widespread promiscuous slaughter, the cannibal soldiers of the State or of the company sometimes feasting on the bodies of the slain.

"These measures served their purpose. The produce of the land, particularly rubber, was obtained in continually increasing quantities. The exports of the Congo State became very large, the imports remained comparatively small, and the concessionaire companies prospered amazingly. One of them, known as the Abir, with a nominal capital of £40,000, made a profit in four years of £600,000, the half of which went to the King; and in 1901, when the speculation was at its best, its £40,000 of shares could have been sold for £2,160,000. Others of the companies could boast of similar results.

"But meanwhile Europe was becoming aware of the price that was being paid in Africa for these profits in Belgium. Travellers, missionaries of various nationalities, administrators in the neighboring territories be-

A STORM OF PUBLIC OPINION

longing to England and France, sent home graphic reports of the cruel oppression that was being practised on the helpless population. In England especially, public opinion was informed of the truth. . . . The British Consul in the Lower Congo, Mr. Roger Casement, was sent on a tour of inquiry into the interior, and his lengthy and detailed report fully confirmed—in some respects extending—the indictment that had been drawn. . . . At last King Leopold, pressed by the despatches of the British Government and bowing to the storm of public opinion,* yielded so far as to authorize further inquiry into the charges that had been made. The investigation by an International Commission, which had been proposed, he rejected. He nominated three Commissioners of his own selection, one a legal officer in the service of the Belgian Government, one a judge in the service of the Congo State, and the third a Swiss jurist of repute. In October, 1904, the Commission reached the Congo. It stayed for five months and made an extended journey into the interior.** After an unexplained delay of eight months its report was

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*The writer gives warm commendation to Mr. E. D. Morel, Secretary of the British Congo Reform Association, whose efficiency and self-sacrificing devotion to effort for exposure and relief of conditions in the Congo State he characterizes as beyond praise. The American Congo Reform Association likewise has been under a great debt to Mr. Morel. His connection with a journal devoted to the interests of West Africa early gave him a direct acquaintance with the facts, and he has devoted himself indefatigably to effort in behalf of the wronged people. It was through his work that the testimony heard by the Commission was secured and given publicity at an early date, thus making futile either suppression or radical modification of the Report.

**It should be borne in mind that but three months were spent in the territory of the upper river and six weeks in the rubber district. The results reached even in an investigation so brief and in so limited an area, are a testimony to the incontrovertible and overwhelming nature of the evidences of wrong. M. Jenniges, formerly a magistrate in the Congo territory, who resigned his position and is now seeking a reform of conditions in that country, stated in a recent address at Vervier that even the exposure made through the Commission must not be accepted as an adequate revelation of the horrors of Congo rule. He said: "The inquiry must have been difficult in the first place. Not a single member of the Commission knew the Upper Congo. M. Nisco had resided only in the Lower

MERIT AND DEFECT OF COMMISSION'S REPORT

published on the 6th of November of this year.* It is this report that I would now examine.

"A Commission selected by the Sovereign whose own actions were the subject of inquiry, two out of its three members being officials of his own Governments, was not accepted by those who had led the movement for Congo Reform as offering guarantees of impartiality. Had the report embodied an aquittal of the Congo State it would not, under the circumstances, have been surprising. The Commissioners, however, have to a great degree risen superior to their natural prepossessions. In one important respect, indeed, to which reference will be made later, their recommendations are disappointing. It is most regrettable, also, that they present no minutes of the evidence taken before them—a circumstance which deprives the report of actuality and force, and prevents outside observers from drawing their own conclusions from the facts which had been ascertained. But the inquiry was pains-

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Congo. The other two had not the faintest idea of the country. They went through the country rapidly. Their visits were announced long in advance. Moreover, the Commission only visited a few places along the main river, and saw but an infinitesimal portion of the country. You might compare the performance to a Commission desiring to ascertain the condition of France and Belgium confining itself to paying a visit to Verviers. As for documents, they only saw the documents which the officials chose to show them. In the Congo the dosiers are composed of minutes, the most compromising of which can be removed at any time. Of private correspondence evidently they saw nothing. In short, the Commission's Report is obviously insufficient."

*During these eight months there were repeated promises of an early issue of the Report, the announcement having been made in the British Parliament in July that it would appear not later than the middle of August. There are indications that the Report was somewhat softened during this presumably troubled period. The Ami de l'Orde, a Belgian Roman Catholic publication, states that M. Janssens, the head of the Commission of Inquiry, before leaving the Congo publicly stated at Boma: "I came here with a feeling of confidence, expecting to find everything in order. I did not think I was about to come into contact with such putridity as I have found. Now we must make a Report. It shall be made. 'Tant pis' if it is published." It is added that "after six months' careful editing" the Report has been published, but that "notwithstanding all these attempts, the truth can no longer be concealed."

taking. The case was fairly tried. The judgment is an honest judgment.

"Being honest, it is necessarily a condemnation. The Belgian defenders of the Congo Government, who were led by a conception of patriotic duty as profoundly false as that of the anti-Dreyfusards in France to deny everything and to meet the critics merely with unceasing torrents of abuse, now have their answer. A tribunal, not of our choosing, selected by the defendant in the cause, has shown that those who denounced Congo misrule were in the right, that the atrocities were not imaginary, that a cruel oppression of the natives has been proceeding unchecked for years.*

. . . . . .

"Here and there, it is true, are points of mitigation, on which the Commissioners are glad to dwell. The establishment of European control has made the country safe for travellers, and the building of the Cataract Railway and the placing of eighty steamers on the rivers have created a system of easy communication. The judiciary, though much understaffed, they hold to be efficient, and the High Court does not fail to punish in the cases of cruelty—comparatively few though they are —which are brought before it.** The soldiery are very well treated; 'they have been the object of every solicitude on the part of the State'—a fact we can well believe, for they constitute the basis on which the whole regime has been built. In the Stanley Falls district the Commissioners believe that the natives are not ill-treated. More important than all, the Arab slave-trade has been suppressed and the importation of alcohol for sale to the natives is forbidden.

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*Here follows a review of the conclusions reached by the Commission. These, with many others, we present in direct citations from the Report, pp. 19-43.

**For grave defects in the judicial administration of the State, see in citations from the Report, pp. 37-39.

THE BLOT UPON THE REPORT

"The blot upon the report, the feature which robs it of the greater part of its value, is the defence—in spite of all that the Commissioners had ascertained of its consequences—of the system of forced labor. Legitimate commerce on any considerable scale they hold to be impossible in the Congo. "The native," they say, 'by heredity and owing to the conditions of life in the country, has no inclination to work. . . . It is only by making work compulsory that the native can be induced to provide a regular supply of labor, that the labor-force can be obtained which is necessary to develop the country, to exploit its natural riches, to draw profit, in short, from its resources.' They would strictly limit the work-tax to forty hours a month; they would withdraw from the concessionaire companies, though retaining for the State itself, the right of using force to exact it; they propose a number of detailed reforms to soften the harshness of its application; they would concede to the native the right of property in the land surrounding his hut and in its produce. The fact remains that forced labor is declared to be the only possible basis both of Government and commerce in the Congo; and so long as this is so, the Congo will continue to be, what it has long been and now is, that anomaly and scandal in the modern world, *an avowed Slave State*.

"There is no sentence in the report which shows that the Commissioners have knowledge of the conditions of any other part of Africa than that which they were charged to investigate. They seem not to be aware that it has been the voluntary labor of the negro which has made South Africa—worked its farms, built its railways, excavated its mines; and which, in the West African possessions of other Powers, has made possible an external trade of nearly twenty million pounds a year. From the apathy of a native population which sees its industry stimulated, not by rewards, but by the 'chicotte' and the gun of the 'sentry,' and which sees the whole product of that industry wrested from it in

the name of taxation, the Commissioners assume an equal apathy were the natives allowed to sell their produce to the highest bidder, and to enjoy as they pleased the remuneration of their work. The experience of the greater part of Africa proves that, given security, kindly treatment and fair payment, the negro is not an idler.* With those conditions established in the Congo, it would not be long before a legitimate commerce, and with it a legitimate revenue, would also grow into being. But this the Commissioners have not the wisdom to see, or perhaps the courage to say, and the omission deprives of foundation the whole structure of reform which they plan.

"The secondary measures they propose for the remedy of the crying abuses which they admit and deplore, would be valuable, no doubt, were they efficiently applied. But the laws of the Congo Free State are, in many respects, admirable as they stand. The difficulty is that the men who rule the territory have little desire that they should be executed, and would be as much annoyed as they would be surprised if they found them enforced to the letter by some too zealous subordinate. On page after page of this report instances are given of flagrant violations of the law, well known to the superior authorities, but wholly unchecked by them. The Congo repeats today the hypocrisies of ancient Spain; for Prescott tells us that at the very time when the unhappy natives of Peru were being

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*Compare with this the statement of Mr. Weeks, page 64, Dr. Hinde, who accompanied the expedition of Baron Dhanis for the overthrow of the Arab slave power, speaks of his surprise in finding "masons, brickmakers, agriculturists and ironworkers."

Mr. Glave, a companion and friend of Stanley, who visited the Congo territory a second time, after it had come under the King's rule, writes in his journal as published in the Century Magazine: "They are not lazy, good-for-nothing people. Their fine powers are obtained by hard work, sobriety, frugal living. . . . The methods employed by the Government are not necessary. Years ago, when I was on duty at the equator without soldiers, I never had any difficulty in getting what men I needed, nor did any other station in the old humane days. . . . It is only the State officials who make war. Seldom do the traders (of the older class) have any trouble, and the missionaries never." Century Magazine, Vol. 54, page 714.

NOT NEW LAWS NEEDED BUT NEW MEN

almost exterminated by the cruelties of the conquistadores, the jurists of Madrid could point with pride to an admirable code of humanitarian legislation passed for their protection by the Imperial power.*

"Every effort has been made, for years past, to conceal the existence of abuses of which the governors of the Congo were fully aware. The complaints of those who revealed them were not sympathetically investigated by administrators anxious to do justice, but vehemently resented as the attacks of interested enemies. Travellers, sent from England by friends of the Congolese Government, have brought home wholly misleading accounts. A subsidized Press—one organ of which has been printed monthly in three languages and distributed gratuitously throughout Western Europe—has disseminated these accounts broadcast, has covered with inexhaustible abuse its critics of every nationality, and has painted the Congo State as the home of a contented population, living under a Government so paternal as to carry benevolence to almost exaggerated extremes.

"Public opinion will be well advised to place little hope of improvement in the new system of forced labor, which is to be established and administered by the same men who have for so long defended and profited by the old."

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*The fact that M. Wahis, an official against whom accusation of flagrant wrongs was made during his earlier term of service, has now been reappointed to the position of Governor-General in Congo State, and that the Director-General of the Abir trust is continued in office, does not create confidence in the rectitude of the king's purpose. Of like import is the fact that of the new Commission of fourteen members, appointed by the king as advisers in the work of reform, twelve are either officials of the rubber trust or are in other ways definitely identified with the king's Congo policy.

II. Extracts From the Commission's Report*

Material Development

"In this sinister and mysterious Continent a State has become constituted and organized with a marvelous rapidity, introducing into the heart of Africa the benefits of civilization. Today security reigns in this immense territory. Almost everywhere the white man, where not animated with hostile intentions, can penetrate without escort or arms."

"Towns resembling our most coquettish seaside resorts, which lighten up and animate the banks of the great river; and the two railheads of the Lower Congo railway—Matadi, where the ocean steamers arrive, and Leopoldville," the great fluvial port, with the activity of its dock-yards, make one think of busy European cities."

Government Firmly Established

"With a limited number of officials the State has accomplished the task of effectively occupying and administering its great domain. By the wise distribution of its government stations it has succeeded in coming into contact with what is practically the whole native population. The villages are now few

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*These representative extracts are carefully verified translations of the original French of the Report, endorsed as accurate by the Local Committee of the Association.

**Regarding the condition of the natives of this region, the Commission speaks in a later paragraph. "The general wretchedness, etc." See p. 24. Compare with this the description given of the State's school at Boma, p. 35. Of like import is the statement in the Memorial to Congress, April, 1904: "Certain material enterprises, as the railway, bear witness to great energy and perseverance, though identified with terrible cost to the lives of the natives; but these enterprises are connected directly with the one aim which unhappily seems to have absorbed the energies of government, that of enriching itself by a swift exploitation of the natural products of the State."

"A RIGHT OF ABSOLUTE AND EXCLUSIVE OWNERSHIP"

which fail to recognize the authority of 'Boula Matadi.' Reports received periodically enable it to profit immediately from the experience of its 2000 agents. On its side it lets its directing power be felt. From instructions constantly forwarded to the department chiefs it makes known a program to be followed by the officials of every grade. This unity of administration is found everywhere."*

Appropriation of Land and Products

"In default of a legal definition, it seems to have been generally admitted on the Congo that lands considered as being occupied by the natives are exclusively the portions of territory upon which they have established their villages or raised their plantations. . . .

"It has even been admitted that on the land occupied by them, the natives cannot dispose of the produce of the soil except to the extent in which they did so before the constitution of the State. . . .

"As the greater portion of the land in the Congo is not under cultivation, this interpretation concedes to the State a right of absolute and exclusive ownership over virtually the whole of the land,** with this consequence: that it can dispose—itself and solely—of all the products of the soil; prosecute as a poacher anyone who takes from that land the least of its fruits, or as a receiver of stolen goods anyone who receives such fruit."

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*For an important qualification of this representation, see pp. 40-43.

The Report incidentally eulogizes the work of the State in extirpating the old-time slave-trade of the Arabs and in prohibiting importation of liquors. The reader will judge how far the native's present position is an improvement upon his condition under Arab rule. Importation of liquors was definitely prohibited in the Congo territory by the International Conference at Brussels, 1889-90.

**The claim leading to this appropriation by the Government of the vast Congo territory first appeared in a document issued July 1, 1885, which at the time was supposed to be dictated by concern for the rights of the natives. It declared that "no one may dispossess any native of land occupied by him," adding that "all vacant land is considered as belonging to the State." Later, through successive public edicts, the breadth of the term "vacant" became apparent.

"THE NATIVE....POSSESSES NOTHING"

"There are no native reserves and, apart from the rough plantations which barely suffice to feed the natives themselves and to supply the stations, all the fruits of the soil are considered as the property of the State or of the concessionaire societies. Thus, although the freedom of trade is formally recognized by law, the native does not own, in many places, the objects which constitute trade."

Change of Residence Prohibited

"The laws of the State guarantee in the most absolute manner the personal liberty of the natives who enjoy, in the same manner as the white man, the right of traveling all over the territory. Such, moreover, is the doctrine of the Courts, who have affirmed this incontestable right. However, the local government has in recent circulars appeared to contest, if not the strict right, at least the possibility of the native displacing himself. These circulars, based upon the principle that all land not effectively occupied belongs to the State, deduce therefrom the consequence that the native cannot settle elsewhere than in the village where he was born, without obtaining the authorization of the State beforehand."

"The activity of the natives is thus limited to very restricted areas, and their economic condition is immobilized. Thus abusively applied, such legislation would prevent any development of native life. In this manner, not only has the native been often forbidden to shift his village, but he has even been forbidden to visit, even temporarily, a neighboring village without special permit. A native displacing himself without being the bearer of such an authorization, would leave himself open to arrest, to be taken back and even punished."

All Products Claimed by the State

"The labor tax is the only impost possible on the Congo, because the native as a general rule possesses

"THE MOST DIVERS IMPOSTS"

nothing beyond his hut, his weapons and a few plantations strictly necessary for his subsistence."*

"It is useful to point out that according to the arrete of 5th October, 1889, 'any person can use his weapons to defend his life or property threatened by one or several elephants. If the adoption of such measures lead to the capture, or the death of the elephant, the animal must be handed over to the District Commissioner.' "

Defense of Small Payment Made to Natives for Products of Country

"It is just, on the other hand, that remuneration should be limited to the value of the labor furnished by the native, and that he should not be paid according to the value of the produce obtainable by his work, because as a rule, the produce does not belong to him; he merely furnishes the work necessary to secure it."

Collection of Products, and Bonuses to Agents

"Each official in charge of a Station, or agent in charge of a factory, claimed from the natives, without asking himself on what grounds, the most divers imposts in labor or in kind, either to satisfy his own needs and those of his Station, or to exploit the riches of the Domaine.

"When the agent was reasonable he endeavored to conciliate the interests of the State, or the companies, with those of the natives, and sometimes he obtained much without violent measures; but numbers of agents only thought of one thing, to obtain as much as possible in the shortest possible time; and their demands were often excessive. This is not at all astonishing, at any rate as regards the gathering of the produce of the Domaine. For the agents them-

*The report states that "some products have been allowed to the natives"; it instances "palm kernels, which form the object of an important export trade in the Lower Congo." It should be borne in mind that it is only in this territory of the Lower Congo, a district representing but the one-hundredth part of the area of the State, that any form of trade is found. Above Stanley Pool the sale of any product by natives or the purchase of products by a foreign trader is a crime.

"THE AGENTS RECEIVED PROPORTIONAL BONUSES"

selves regulated the tax and saw to its collection, and had a direct interest in increasing its amount, since they received proportional bonuses on the produce thus collected."*

The Food Tax

"The population in the first zone must furnish the kwanga every four days; those in the second, every eight days; those in the third, every twelve days—Such is the system. Its inconveniences can immediately be observed. All the witnesses heard by the Commission have been unanimous in criticising, notably the exaggerated quantity imposed upon the women of certain villages, the continuity of the imposition, and the long journeys demanded of the taxpayers. The most painful aspect of this tax is its continuity. As kwanga only keeps for a few days, the native, even by duplicating his activity, cannot succeed in liberating himself from the imposition for a lengthy period. This imposition, even if it does not demand the whole of his time, weighs upon him continually by the short time elapsing between the supplies he has to furnish, which causes the tax to lose its true character and transforms it into a veritable corvee, since there is always with him the thought of the delivery that must soon be made."

"These carriers are the people who constitute the industrious element in the village, and if the greater part of their time is absorbed by the exigencies of the tax and the necessity of providing for their own sustenance, they have barely the time, even if they show good will, to devote themselves to anything else; whence comes the abandonment of native industries and the

*Payment to agents of the State of bonuses, varying with the amount of rubber and ivory obtained by them, was strenuously denied by the Government until M. Vandervelde in the Belgian Parliament produced a circular of the Governor-General establishing the practice, with letters from the Secretary of State, in which the system was elaborated. The Commission states that the law establishing the system of bonuses has been rescinded, but admits that it is charged that the system is universally prevalent under another name.

"THE GENERAL WRETCHEDNESS"

incontestable impoverishment of the villages. Missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant, whom we heard at Leopoldville, were unanimous in accentuating the general wretchedness existing in the region. One of them said that 'this system, which compels the natives to feed 3000 workmen at Leopoldville, will, if continued for another five years, wipe out the population of the district."

"It is not admissible that one should be compelled to travel 150 kilometres (94 miles) to bring to the place of delivery a tax representing a value of about one and a half francs (30 cents.)"

"As for the sheep, the goats, the fowls and the ducks, the Commission was able to observe for itself their increasing scarcity, and consequently their dearness. What is the reason for this impoverishment? Precisely because these animals, instead of being an object of Commerce, are demanded as a Tax, often in a most arbitrary fashion. The native who only receives remuneration insufficient in his eyes, and in any case notably inferior to the real value, is not in the least encouraged to breed goats or fowls."

"Apart from a few kilograms of fresh fish for the white men, which are generally furnished without difficulty, virtually the entire produce of native fisheries consists in rations of dried fish for the black workmen. This imposition gives rise to the same inconveniences as in the case of the kwanga imposition. Almost everywhere the quantities demanded have given rise to complaints, especially on the part of chiefs of villages the population of which had decreased, and which were taxed disproportionately to the number of their inhabitants. We found that, some of the banks of the river being sparsely populated, stations like those of Nouvelle Anvers, for instance, were compelled to call in the services of fishermen a long way off. Natives inhabiting the neighborhood of Lulonga were compelled to travel in canoes to Nouvelle Anvers, a journey from 40 to 50 miles, every fortnight, to bring their fish, and

taxpayers have been imprisoned for delays which were, perhaps, not attributable to them, if one bears in mind the considerable distances to be traversed to satisfy the demands made by the imposition."*

The Porterage System

"Judicial officials have informed us of the sorry consequences of the porterage system; it exhausts the wretched people who are subjected to it, and threatens them with partial destruction."**

Rubber Collection

"This circumstance (exhaustion of the rubber) explains the repugnance of the native for rubber work which, in itself, is not particularly painful. In the majority of cases the native must go one or two days' march every fortnight, until he arrives at that part of the forest where the rubber vines can be met with in a certain degree of abundance. There the collector passes a number of days in a miserable existence. He has to build himself an improvised shelter, which cannot, obviously, replace his hut. He has not the food to which he is accustomed. He is deprived of his wife, exposed to the inclemencies of the weather and the attacks of wild beasts. When once he has collected the rubber he must bring it to the State Station or to that of the Company, and only then can he return to his village, where he can sojourn for barely more than two or three days, because the next demand is upon him."***

*The report recommends that the State shall "itself partially supply stations with dried fish and rice." It is thus made apparent that the entire military force, numbering some 30,000 men, besides the thousands of workmen and the European agents, have been quartered upon the people, the impost being laid upon the several localities concerned without regard to the strength or feebleness of the population.

**Corroboration of this statement is given by Mr. Glave, the companion of Stanley. "I saw the dead body of a carrier lying on the trail. He was nothing but skin and bone. These posts ought to give some care to porters. The heartless disregard for life is abominable. No wonder the State is hated." Century Magazine, Vol. 54, p. 713.

***An edict, limiting the labor requirement to forty hours per month, was issued November 18, 1903. It appears that the Commission found the edict a dead letter. In another paragraph it is

"OFFICIALS HAVE FLOGGED RUBBER COLLECTORS"

The Rule of Force

"The only legal means at the disposal of the State, for compelling the native to work, is by ordaining a labor-tax."

"As soon as the territory near to the villages was exhausted, and, consequently, the labor of the native become more painful, force was alone able to conquer the apathy of the native."

"The disinclination of the negro for all work; his particular antipathy to gathering rubber, have made force a necessity."

"The native only understands, only respects, force: He confounds it with justice. The State must be able to ensure the triumph of law, and consequently force the native to work."

"From what precedes, it may be concluded, we think, that everywhere on the Congo, notwithstanding certain appearances to the contrary, the native only collects rubber under the influence of force directly or indirectly exercised."

"Very often, then, in order to secure workmen, force has been used and chiefs have been compelled to furnish workers as they have furnished soldiers."

"Until recently this compulsion has been exerted in divers ways, such as carrying away of hostages, imprisonment of chiefs, stationing sentinels or overseers, fines and armed expeditions."

"Officials in charge of stations, arrogating to themselves a right which never belonged to them, have flogged rubber collectors who have not completely satisfied the requirements demanded of them. Some have even committed outrages, which is established by the judgments of the Courts. Natives instructed to su-

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definitely stated that this act was neutralized at the outset by an action of the Governor-General. See p. 41.

With this may be compared the following earlier edict: "I beg to bring to your notice that from January 1, 1899, it is necessary that 4000 kilos of India rubber shall be furnished every month. To insure this result, I give you carte blanche." Written instructions of Commandant Verstraten, District Commissioner in the Congo State. to his subordinates.

*Compare with this the declaration made by the Congo Government in July, 1900. See p. 43.

pervise the prisoners have been guilty of acts of violence towards them, often of the gravest character."

The Sentry System

"By sentries are meant the black overseers, equipped with muzzle-loading guns, whose official duty it is to direct the work of the natives in the forest. The greater part of their time, however, seems to be spent in reminding the natives of their obligations, making sure that they go to the forest and accompanying the gatherers when they return to the post."

"Among these overseers some, who make up the personnel of the post and who almost always are strangers to the region, go to the villages during working hours and report to the whites those who are idling at home instead of being at work. Frequently, that more complete supervision may be had, they are delegated to a village to stay permanently."

"This system of native supervisors has given rise to numerous criticisms, even on the part of State officials. The Protestant missionaries heard at Bolobo, Ikoko (Lake Mantumba) Lulonga, Bonginda, Ikau, Baringa and Bongandanga, drew up formidable accusations against the acts of these intermediaries.

"They brought before the Commission a multitude of native witnesses who revealed a large number of crimes and excesses alleged to have been committed by the sentinels. According to the witnesses, these auxiliaries, especially those stationed in the villages, abuse the authority conferred upon them, convert themselves into despots, claiming the women and the food, not only for themselves but for the body of parasites and creatures without any calling which a love of rapine causes to become associated with them, and with whom they surround themselves as with a veritable bodyguard; they kill without pity all those who attempt to resist their exactions and whims. The Commission was obviously unable in all cases to verify the exactitude of the allegations made before it, the more so as the facts were often several years old. However,

"A MASS OF EVIDENCE"

the truth of the charges is borne out by a mass of evidence and official reports."

"Of how many abuses the native sentinels have been guilty it would be impossible to say, even approximately. Several chiefs of Baringa brought us, according to the native custom, bundles of sticks, each of which was meant to show one of their subjects killed by the capitas.

"The accusations against the sentries seem to be well founded. Moreover, the agents examined by the Commission or present at its sittings did not even attempt to refute them. The least unfavorable opinion about the sentries was that of the Manager of the Abir Company, who said, "The sentry is an evil, but a necessary evil." We cannot share this view. In our judgment the institution, as we have seen it at work in the Abir and Lulonga territories, should be suppressed."

"There is no despot more cruel than a black given control of other blacks, when unrestrained by ties of race, family or tradition."

Flogging with the Chicotte

"The blacks employed by the State should accept, along with the other conditions of their contract, the disciplinary punishments which practically are the same as apply to the soldiers. The use of the chicotte is the most frequent form of punishment. The rules indicate fifty strokes as the maximum, and not more than twenty-five may be given an offender in any one day. In case of a wound being caused, or fainting, the strokes must cease immediately"*

"Despite the provisions of the law as to the use of the chicotte, violations at times occur, either in its too frequent use for minor offenses or in exceeding the prescribed number of strokes."

Mutilations

"It is principally during armed expeditions that the mutilations occurred to which certain witnesses, and particularly the Protestant missionaries, drew the attention of the Commission."

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*Compare testimony of witnesses, pp. 49, 60, 62.

"THE DEATH RATE WAS HIGH"

"It is more than probable that at the beginning of the occupation some white officers tolerated this barbarous custom (of cutting off hands) or at least did not do what they could to root it out. The result of this has been the mutilation of living natives whom the soldiers or sentries had believed to be dead."*

The Hostage System

"When the rubber fell short, the agents arrested the chief of the village, or seized as hostages some of the inhabitants, often women, taken haphazard . . . and kept them sometimes for several months."

"We were, it is true, assured that the prisoners were not badly treated, that excessive labors were not imposed upon them. We have even been told that the lot of the women prisoners was not more painful than the existence of beasts of burden to which native custom subjects them. Nevertheless it is undeniable that imprisonment has often been aggravated by its accompanying circumstances."

"We were informed that the houses of detention were often in a very bad state, that the prisoners were insufficiently fed, and that the death rate amongst them was high."**

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*The Commission is disposed to believe that this practice of mutilation perpetuates an original native custom. This conclusion is at variance with views strongly expressed by those familiar with the country for many years. As to the main fact—that the severed hands are brought to the white agents as proof that orders given them have been executed—there appears to be no difference between the conclusions of the Commission and the statements of missionaries and other independent witnesses.

**A missionary, who read the above, comments: "I shall never forget the impression left on my mind by the sight of one of these horrible houses of detention. It was at Mompona, in the A. B. I. R. territory. It was a small, low-roofed, circular building, with the only entrance to it through another building of the same type. This latter was occupied by a number of sentries with Albini rifles. Inside the other were herded a large number of women, girls and boys—a mass of bones held together by black skin. I addressed myself to one poor skeleton of a woman lying in front of me where I stood. I asked her if she was sick. 'Two days ago,' she answered, 'I gave birth to a child, and oh! white man, I am dying of hunger, I've had nothing to eat.' She was so weak that it was with difficulty she could articulate her words. And oh, the faces of those others! The horror of it! Outside the building there was a row of those skeleton women in the chain, followed by a sentry with an Albini and a chicotte, going back and forward from the garden to the river."

"FORCED TO SERVILE TASKS"

Abuse of Native Chiefs

"The intermediary between the white man and the natives ought to be, as far as practicable, the village chief. . . . These, indeed, govern often in a paternal manner; in every case their rule is accepted by the populations; the natives hold them in much respect and affection and it is very rarely indeed that they complain of them. We refer here only to the chiefs of villages or of small groups of villages."

"Chiefs have been utilized to get labor from the natives and imposts, but only by making them personally responsible for all shortages and for all the faults of their people, without recognizing their being possessed of any rights or authority over their people. Many have disappeared or lie hidden; others refuse all contact with the white man."

"The imprisonment of the chiefs has completely destroyed their authority, the more so as they have been forced to the performance of servile tasks."

Military Expeditions

"Frequently expeditions of this kind are simple reconnoisances, a peaceful tour, in the course of which the white officer simply leads his troops into the disobedient or delinquent village. He puts himself in touch with the chiefs, convincing the blacks who care for nothing but force, of the power of the State and showing them the futility of allowing their obstinacy to bring them into conflict with the regular troops. Often this mode of procedure produces admirable results."

"Occasionally it is deemed necessary to act more energetically. In such cases, the written order given by his superior to the commander of the expedition was limited to the direction that he should 'recall the natives to their duties.' The most frequent result is that the natives flee at the approach of the expedition without attempting any resistance. The practice generally followed then consisted in occupying the deserted village or the neighboring plantations. Driven by hunger the natives come back either singly or in small

groups. They arrest them and try to lay hold of the chiefs or head men who almost always yield, pledging themselves never again to fail in their obligations, and sometimes they are compelled to pay a fine besides. When it happens that the natives delay in reappearing, the customary plan is the sending of search parties to beat the bush and bring in all the natives they may find. The dangers of this system are readily seen. The armed black left alone feels the reviving of the old sanguinary instinct which even the most rigid discipline can with difficulty hold in check. It is in connection with this form of service that the greater part of the murders have been committed for which the State soldiers are reproached."

"A still more difficult operation is that of the expedition sent out to capture the fugitives.

"The vague indefiniteness of the orders given, and sometimes the irresponsibility of those charged with their execution, have frequently resulted in unjustifiable murders. It often happens that the natives, to escape the payment of the tax, and especially the collection of rubber, migrate singly or in a body, and go to settle another district. Then a detachment of troops is sent after them who, sometimes by persuasion, sometimes after a fight, bring the fugitives back again."

"In the course of such expeditions grave abuses have occurred; men, women and children have been killed even at the very time they sought safety in flight. Others have been imprisoned. Women have been taken as hostages."

"At times the military expedition assumes a character still more openly repressive. The order given to the commander of an expedition was generally worded as follows: 'N——— is instructed to punish or chastise such and such a village.'"

"Military action of this nature always goes beyond its purpose; the penalty being in flagrant disproportion to the offense. The guilty and the innocent are involved in the same punishment."

"MASSACRES, PILLAGE, INCENDIARISM"

"The consequences are often most sanguinary. And this is not surprising. If, in the course of delicate operations for the capture of hostages and intimidation of the natives, constant watchfulness could not always prevent the blood-thirsty instincts of the blacks from breaking loose,—when orders to punish are given by superior authority it is difficult to prevent the expedition from degenerating into massacres, accompanied by pillage and incendiarism."

"In considering these facts one must bear in mind the deplorable confusion still existing in the Upper Congo between a state of war and a state of peace; between administration and repression; between those who may be regarded as enemies and those who have the right to be regarded as citizens of the State and treated in accordance with its laws. The Commission was struck with the general tone of the reports relating to operations described above. Often, while admitting that the expedition had been sent out solely for shortage in taxation, and without making allusion to an attack or resistance on the part of the natives, which alone would justify the use of arms, the authors of these reports speak of 'surprising villages,' 'energetic pursuit,' 'numerous enemies killed and wounded,' 'loot,' 'prisoners of war,' 'conditions of peace.' Evidently these officers thought themselves at war,—acted as though at war. This situation cannot be prolonged. In the interests of the people and of the agents of the Government, the natives must not be open to find themselves treated from one day to another as enemies beyond the pale of the law. In any case it should be understood that the mere fact of a delay or shortage in the payment of taxes, if it gives rise to the use of force, should not justify expectations having the character of operations of war."

"We hasten to say that military expeditions of this nature have become rare in most of the districts."*

*Unfortunately this impression is not supported by the latest testimony. See pp. 64-72.

"THE EXODUS OF THE POPULATION"

Depopulation of Country

"Several missionaries heard by the Commission pointed out the depopulation they said they had noticed in some regions known to them. It is evident that the Commission could not arrive at a conclusion in this respect. Nevertheless, if we accept Stanley's figures, it is incontestable that a large part of the population must have disappeared, for, from Stanley Pool to Nouvelle Anvers, the banks of the river are almost deserted."

"It often happens that the natives, in order to escape from taxes and especially from the rubber tax, emigrate in twos or threes, or en masse and settle in another region, or even in another district."

"It may easily be conceived that the riverine peoples, who were the first to feel the impositions levied by the white man, should have endeavored to escape from these impositions, and have taken refuge on French territory or in other parts of the territory where they assumed the impositions could not reach them. The population has in some cases been drained so to speak, by the frequent levies of soldiers and workmen."

"It is not too bold to assert that at the present time the great majority of the natives escape all imposts, either because of the incomplete penetration of their territory (by the white man) or because of the exodus of the population whom former exigencies or the proceedings of certain agents have terrified."*

"It must not be inferred from the foregoing that

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*The Commission, in general, is inclined to attribute the shocking decline in the population primarily to other causes than the wrongs suffered under the rule of Government; the effect of these wrongs in promoting depopulation is, however, clearly recognized. Missionaries, of long residence in the country, uniformly ascribe the swift decrease in population to administrative abuses.

For example, Mr. Gilchrist, referring to certain diseases to which the decline has been attributed, says:

"With regard to the causes of depopulation in the Lolanga district, where I have lived for 14 years, I emphatically affirm that for one who has died of sleeping sickness, there have been 20 deaths due to lung and intestinal diseases; and for one death due to small-nox there have been 40 due to lung and intestinal troubles. Sleeping sickness has been in our district not more than seven years, and never epidemic; small-pox we have had twice in fourteen years, and comparatively few died of it. The

"CHILDREN BOUND FOR MANY YEARS"

the population is everywhere decreasing or that the unions are always sterile. In the Lopori and the Maringa basins and upon the banks of the Congo River from Mobeka to the Falls, as well, we have noticed that there are frequent villages and a considerable number of young children."

The State's Contract System

"The law demands that each master or employer shall see to it that every contract for services is written out and presented to the proper authority for endorsement. Sanction cannot be given until it is certain that the workman understands perfectly and accepts voluntarily the conditions of the engagement."

"On the Upper Congo, on the contrary, it may be said, that almost nowhere are the intentions of the legislator—not to say the letter of the law—regarded."

"The unfortunate effects of long engagements are peculiarly observable in the case of children. The District Commissioners employ, especially for the work in the fields, children seven and eight years of age, who find themselves bound for many years by a contract which possibly they have voluntarily accepted but whose full meaning certainly they were not in a position to know. Now by the instruction of the Director of Justice, the officials cannot refuse to sanction contracts if the children say they accept them."

The Wards of the State

"At Boma and at New Antwerp there have been established what are called educational colonies. . . . Native children up to the age of twelve are allowed to enter these colonies. They follow three courses or three years of study."

"The State has incurred the reproach of 'recruiting', under pretense of helping,—but against the desire of

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[illegible]ng and intestinal diseases are without doubt due, in a very large proportion of the cases, to exposure involved in collecting the taxes, and in hiding from the soldiers in the forests, as well as the miserable huts the natives now live in, because they have neither time nor heart to build better."

the parties interested,—young natives who are wanted to fill the ranks of its constabulary."

"The State retains guardianship of the children until their 25th year. The duration of this tutelage is excessive. The decree fails to appreciate native conditions of life; 30 or 35 years is usually the limit of the length of life of the black; his sixteenth year is the beginning of adult age and the result of this provision practically is to keep the wards of the State almost to the end of their life in the position of minors."

"The dormitories at Boma are built of bamboo which the cold night wind easily penetrates. Thus exposed the children develop lung trouble to which the native offers but feeble resistance. On this account the death rate among the pupils of the State is quite large."

"Feeling such a condition intolerable, the present Director of the colony set about replacing these dormitories by solid brick buildings. But falling short of funds he had to use the young pupils themselves to do the work. Children of from six to twelve years of age had to dry and carry bricks. Their studies consequently were completely interrupted and, without advantage to their intellectual or even practical development, the children were changed into laborers and kept at work which often exceeded their strength."

The Concessionary Societies*

"By concession is meant the right given to commercial companies, for a considerable financial return, to gather exclusively for their own profit certain products of the territories of the State."

"The Concessionnaire Societies, by the fact that they are commercial, pursue lucre and not humanity and civilization."

"It is apparent that such a company, upon which the State has imposed no restrictions, regards itself as absolute mistress in its domain, and it is not to be wondered at that the laws of the State have been openly violated."

*In these the king has as a rule not less than one-half interest.

"NOTHING IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATIVES"

"In order to allow the companies to use this (coercion) the State, claiming a right to a certain amount of labor as an assessment, delegated its powers in part to the concessions. That is to say, it authorized these societies to require of the blacks labor in the rubber forests and also other forms of assessment, and to use coercion in obtaining them."

"It is in the territories exploited by the concessionary companies that the most flagrant abuses have been committed."

"These (concessionaire) societies have done nothing in the interest of the natives or to improve the regions they occupy."

"It was barely denied that in the various posts of the A. B. I. R. which we visited, the imprisonment of women hostages, the subjection of the chiefs to servile labor, the humiliations meted out to them, the flogging of rubber collectors, the brutality of the black employees set over the prisoners, were the rule commonly followed."*

The Higher Courts Commended

"The Commission has received no complaint throughout its long investigation, and makes no criticism, as to the discharge of their important and delicate duties by the courts administered by trained magistrates."

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*Endeavor is made to shield the State (the king) from responsibility for the excesses characterizing the rule of these societies. But these societies are commissioned by the State. The king is a controlling share holder in the A. B. I. R. company, for example, whose notorious maladministration figures so conspicuously in the Report. His interests in this company a few years ago had a market value of $6,000,000. Documents have been published which show that State soldiers have been supplied regularly to these companies for enforcement of their exactions and that great quantities of ammunition have been furnished them. The Report shows also incidentally that Commissioners of State have made visits to this section and that official reports have been made to the central administration of all their transactions. It should be borne in mind also that even the horrors disclosed in the territory of the Abir trust do not surpass those revealed in the private domain of the king (Domaine Prive), as recorded in Mr. Scrivener's visit to this territory. See Memorial to Congress, pp. 51, 52.

"MANY DIE DURING THE VOYAGE"

A Fundamental Defect of the Judicial Administration

"The unsatisfactory character of this (system of) judicial centralization appears at once, for it involves extension of the jurisdiction of the Boma court through the whole country."

Experience of Witnesses

"It is a sorrowful truth which experience has demonstrated, so the magistrates tell us, that a large number of native witnesses compelled to go from the upper Congo to Boma never see their villages again, but die during the voyage which is imposed upon them. The resistance of the natives to change of diet and climate is, so to speak, nil. The mere word "Boma" terrifies them. Thus at the present moment it is very difficult, if not impossible, in many regions of the upper Congo, to induce the natives to testify before the tribunals. The inhabitant of the Upper Congo summoned as a witness, flies to the forest. He must be treated as a criminal, hunted, chained sometimes, in any case subjected to force, to conduct him from his village to the court."

"Even when all possible care is extended to them, the ranks of these unfortunates are found to be very rapidly reduced by a homesick longing for the great equatorial forests. It is, therefore, not surprising that the deaths are still more numerous when, as sometimes happens during their long journey, or in the localities in which they are to render their testimony, they are given unsuitable lodgings or are without sufficient food."*

"Before the records, the witnesses and the accused party can be brought to the court, many months, years even, pass. Meanwhile the white agents have returned

*The death of so many witnesses during the journey to the lower river can hardly be ascribed solely to natural causes. This painful passage in the Commission's report suggests apprehension that the fears of the natives must have operated, in some cases, to prevent the giving of testimony freely to the Commission, and that even this damaging report may unavoidably fall short of a full disclosure of the conditions the Commission sought to investigate. Compare with this the following:

"The Commission arrived on Tuesday, 15th November, 1904. I had a telegram on Sunday asking me to have witnesses in

"DEPRIVED OF ALL CHECK OR CONTROL"

to Europe, the negroes are no longer to be found; recollections are effaced, the facts are transformed into legends."

"It is needless to call attention to the great injury wrought by this state of things to the prestige of law and the judicial administration."

"It often happens that the injured native, rather than expose himself to the dangers and fatigues of a voyage to Boma declines to complain. Infractions remain ignored, abuses multiply themselves, the discontent of the people increases, and even manifests itself suddenly by violence and revolts, which the intervention of justice might have prevented."

Political Prisoners.

"The Commissioners have observed in the prisons the presence,—often in considerable numbers,—of inmates who appear upon the lists as political prisoners. They are incarcerated under a simple order from the administrative authority. The cause of their arrest in general is in no way political. As a rule they are natives who have neglected to meet their assessments; there are others who have given shelter to those who were delinquent or who were fleeing from justice."

A Helpless Judiciary

"It is strange to observe that whilst the law surrounds with serious safeguards individual liberty it should allow administrative action to be deprived so to speak, of all check or control."

"Judicial officers cannot, according to Government regulations, prosecute Europeans without the permis-

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all readiness for the following day, but the exigencies of steamer life delayed them until Tuesday. I got as many witnesses as possible from the riverine towns; there was no time to attempt to get any from inland. If there had been time given I am not sure whether I could have obtained any witnesses, for two reasons: (1) The inland people particularly are greatly afraid of giving evidence, lest worse should befall them; (2) and I had not food for them during their stay, for the food I was able to grow on my station was not sufficient for my men and boys, and the weekly kwanga tax was a great drain on the resources of the villagers. The inquiry was held on one of the steamers with all formality, and was as public as the limits of the steamer permit-

"PROCEEDINGS....NOT FOLLOWED UP"

sion of the Public Prosecutor himself (who resides in Boma, the capital), and the Public Prosecutor cannot accede to the request without the permission of the governor-general, who has supreme supervision over the machinery of the law."

"The deputy of the court, when upon his circuit, has need of transportation, food supplies and an escort. Now in this respect he is entirely dependent upon the commissioner of the district, who can give or withhold the canoe, the soldiers or the police officers, the rations."

"The Commission found, indeed, that very often proceedings which had been started by the Assistants of the Public Prosecutor against white men accused of having ill-treated natives, were not followed up owing to administrative decision. No motives being assigned for these decisions it would be difficult to say to what extent they were justified. In any case, it is necessary that henceforth the responsibility of such measures should be left to the judicial authority."*

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ted. At the close of the inquiry the witnesses were paid some pieces of cloth to share among themselves.

"There was not, so far as I know, any direct attempt to suborn witnesses at Lukolela either before, for, or after the Commission's inquiry. The only thing we had to overcome was the fear engendered by the previous treatment witnesses have experienced in detention and removal to Leopoldville."—Rev. John Whitehead, Lukolela.

*M. J. M. Jenniges, who served for many years as a magistrate under the Government of the Congo State, spoke as follows in an address at Verviers a few weeks since:—

"The Congo Judiciary is subservient to the Governor-General, who at any moment can remove the Judges and Assistant Public Prosecutors; it is therefore powerless to suppress abuses. . . . The entire organization of the Judicial department depends upon the Administrative authorities. . . . A white man cannot be summoned before the courts without an authorization from the Governor-General. If a magistrate wishes to travel, he must apply to the District Commissioner for food, canoes and carriers. If he is not on good terms with that official he will get bad and insufficient food, weak carriers, etc. Once a Liege magistrate, who was not on good terms with the Executive official of the district, received for four months' journey a defective canoe, two pounds of flour and a pot of butter. A magistrate will, therefore, exercise wise discretion before coming into conflict with an official. . . . A circular issued in 1904 states that when a magistrate is about to investigate abuses he must place all the facts before the Executive administrator of the district. As, three times out of four, the guilty parties have merely carried out the orders of that very official, whom they know to be interested in the affair, the kind of task which the magistrate has to perform is to be im-

"THE ONLY REPRESENTATIVE OF JUSTICE"

The Missionary

"Often also, in the regions where evangelical stations are established, the native, instead of going to the magistrate, his rightful protector, adopts the habit when he thinks he has a grievance against an agent or an Executive officer, to confide in the missionary. The latter listens to him, helps him according to his means, and makes himself the echo of all the complaints of a region. Hence the astounding influence which the missionaries possess in some parts of the territory. It exercises itself not only among the natives within the purview of their religious propaganda, but over all the villages whose troubles they have listened to. The missionary becomes, for the native of the region, the only representative of equity and justice.* He adds to the position resulting from his religious zeal the influence which in the interest of the State itself, should be secured to the magistrate."

The Accusing Record of Administrative Indifference to the Rights and Interests of the Native Peoples

"A decree of the King-Sovereign of December 5th, 1892, (not published in the Bulletin Officiel) directs the Secretary of State 'to do whatever he may deem necessary or practicable to ensure the exploitation of the Domaine Prive.'"

"For a long time (i. e. until November, 1903,) the

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agined. His task can indeed be rendered impossible by the Executive official. As the magistrate, furnished with the barest necessities, makes his way to the scene of the outrages he proposes investigating, the Executive official will dispatch fleet messengers to the guilty party, and when the magistrate arrives at his journey's end, he can find no witnesses, and inquiry becomes impossible. The magistrate, say the natives, is the small judge; the Executive official the great judge."

*With this may be compared a paragraph (relating to another section of the vast State) found in the Memorial of Missionary Societies to Congress, April, 1904:

"A white officer, unacquainted with the missionary whom he was addressing, after a cruel raid jokingly remarked that he had killed many people and secured a fine lot of curios. He said that while his soldiers were firing upon the villages the people ran wildly about crying, 'Sheppite, Sheppite.' It was their name for Rev. W. H. Sheppard, the associate of Mr. Morrison, whom they were beseeching to come to their aid."

"MUST SHOW A CONSTANT INCREASE"

administration believed it could derive from this (decree) the right to make assessments and also to delegate this privilege to companies, without any specification as to the nature or amount of the tax or even the degree of force that might be employed to secure it."

"Under date of November 18, 1903, the King-Sovereign issued a decree fixing a uniform law of taxes for the entire State. So far as relates to the natives, the substance of this law is as follows: Every adult native who is in good health is subject to assessment, to consist of labor for the State. The maximum amount during any one month is forty hours of actual labor and the work is to be paid for; this remuneration to be not less than the actual wages paid in the neighborhood.

"In only a few of the districts had this law been put into effect up to the time of the coming of the Commission."

"A circular of the Governor-General on February 29, 1904, announces to the District Commissioners that the effect of enforcing the new law (of November, 1903,) regarding assessments must be not simply to maintain the results of previous years but to show a constant increase in the revenues.

"Presented in a form so absolute these instructions were bound, in the majority of cases, to prevent the District Commissioners from reducing impositions that were excessive by establishing new returns. And, indeed, many of them contented themselves with re-enforcing the amount of the preceding taxes.

"Does the Government intend by this that agents should merely seek to increase the number of enrolled contributors in proportion as under peaceful rule, the territory should become more accessible and the natives more amenable to taxation?"

"Article 54 (of the King's edict of November, 1903,) states that in lieu of seizable property, forced labor may be demanded. But how shall this be done? Shall one put a native in chains and inflict corporal punish-

"NO RESTRAINT....UPON THE AGENTS"

ment? How long may he be imprisoned and to what labor shall he be put? It is true that interpretative circulars have fixed one month as the maximum term of detention at hard labor, but it is evident the regulation is still left subject to the judgment of the agents."

"No restraint was placed upon the agents as respects the manner of their conformity to the official standard."

"The law of November 18, 1903, does not adequately decide in the question as to compulsory measures."

"The law of the Free State has never defined what is to be understood by the term 'land occupied by the natives.' "

"The law requires payment of the local rate of wages as the minimum but the circular of February 29, 1904, seems to indicate that it shall be the maximum."

"The same lack of definiteness prevailed as regards the means of compulsion when necessary to use this for non-payment of taxes. The agents, like all the rest, followed no rule."

"A law ought to indicate clearly what officials can declare the operations of war, decide conditions under which they may be undertaken and the form they shall assume. Then one will know certainly when he is under the empire of the common law of the State and when he should bow to martial law."

"It is true to say in general that everything regarding prescription and assessments as relates to the natives, until the last years, was left to the judgment of the agents."

"We must say that the agents were not properly cautioned against these excesses."

"In this great concession (the Abir) there was only one State agent, the commandant of the police force stationed at Basankusu. Although having legal duties and powers, he has never reported to the superior officers any illegal acts occurring in his district. His role has always been restricted to quelling native revolts or to bringing refractory villages back to work. We are justified in believing that he thought he had

"RARELY BROUGHT TO THE COURTS"

no other mission to fulfill for the instructions given him as read by us relate always to these matters."

"(Official) infractions of law in the exercise of force have but rarely been brought to the courts."

Limitations of the Commission's Functions

"The Commission has not deemed the determining of personal responsibility to be the object of its inquiry."

"We will not enter upon the question of the freedom of trade in its relation to the Berlin Act. Such an inquiry would take us beyond the limits set for us."

A Characteristic Declaration of the Congo Government

"These ideas (embodied in the Commission's report) are the same already expressed by the Secretaries General in their report to the King-Sovereign on the 15th of July, 1900. It is there stated that the plan followed by the Government 'is to exploit the Private Domain solely by the voluntary contributions of the natives, the inducing motive to work being a just and adequate remuneration.' "*

*Compare with this, for example, the Commission's findings as to systematic universal employment of force, p. 26.

III. The Evidence

For the following reproduction of the testimony presented to the Commission at hearings held in towns in the interior of Africa, we are indebted first to the missionaries concerned and, secondly, to Mr. E. D. Morel, by whom the testimony was secured and published. The investigation made is spoken of by the missionaries as having been conducted with impartiality. Their own statements were heard and many native witnesses appeared in corroboration of their testimony. The missionaries spoke evidently with the utmost frankness and fair-mindedness. They commended certain local administrators. As regards the depopulation of the country, they recognized that this was due in part to other causes as, for example, to sleeping sickness, though this scourge they believed had been greatly intensified by the mental state induced in the people by the conditions under which they lived. The prevalence of frightful wrongs was affirmed by a great company of witnesses and, so far as appears, was not seriously denied. The attitude of the Commission in general apparently was that indicated in the report of Mr. Harris of Baringa,—"I told them I could go on until they were satisfied that hundreds of murders had been committed in this district alone—murders of chiefs, men, women and little children—and that additional witnesses only awaited my signal to appear by the thousand. Everyone saw the hopelessness of trying to investigate things fully; to do so the Commission would have had to stay here for months. The Commission, therefore, agreed to accept

the following as a true general statement—that hundreds of people have been killed in this district alone for rubber, and that I could prove it by multitudes of witnesses."

Testimony at Hearings of the Commission*

BWEMBA

Station of the American Baptist Missionary Union

MR. BILLINGTON made a statement dealing chiefly with forced labor, the tying up of men and women, etc., confirming the report sent by him to his mission headquarters in Boston which were embodied in the Memorial presented to Congress in April, 1904.

BOLOBO

Station of the English Baptist Missionary Society

MR. GRENFELL, who has been cited frequently as an upholder of the present regime, a contention based, apparently, upon statements made by him some years ago, before he became personally acquainted with the present state of affairs on the upper river, expressed to the Commissioners his disappointment at the failure of the Congo Government to realize the promises with which it inaugurated its career. He declared he could no longer wear the decorations which he had received from the Sovereign of the Congo State. He stated that the evils from which the country was suffering were due to the haste of a few men to get rich, and the absence of anything like a serious attempt to properly police the country in the interests of the people. He instanced the virtual impossibility of a native obtaining justice, owing to witnesses being compelled to travel long distances either to Leopoldville or Boma.

*Selected from affidavits secured from those who appeared as witnesses before the commission.

"MEN OF STONE WOULD BE MOVED"

MR. SCRIVENER dealt with the appalling condition of affairs he discovered in King Leopold's special reserve the *Domaine de la Couronne,* during his one hundred and fifty mile journey through that district in 1903* and brought forward a number of native witnesses in proof of his statement. Lieut. Massard, one of the officials implicated, from whom the Press published last year a letter attacking Mr. Scrivener was subsequently arrested.**

In the course of the examination the Commissioners asked a rather youthful witness: "How is it you know the names of the men who were murdered?" "One of them was my own father," was the unexpected reply. "Men of stone," wrote Mr. Scrivener, "would be moved by the stories that are being unfolded as the Commission probes into this awful history of rubber collection."

In the course of his testimony Mr. Scrivener said: "Not only are the natives often obliged to go several days' march into the forests to collect the rubber, but they are also compelled to all go to the Government station, which is sometimes a great distance away, to each carry strips of rubber which, all told, sometimes weigh actually less than the sticks on which they are tied for carriage. The natives who collect rubber impositions should only be required to furnish them quarterly, and the transport should be limited to the number of men necessary to effect it, instead of compelling all the men to undertake long and useless journeys."

"You mentioned that five natives were placed in single file and killed with a single shot by Lieut. Massard, or by his orders. Among the witnesses you are able to

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*For Mr. Scrivener's report of the journey see Memorial of Missionary Societies to United States Senate in Senate Document, No. 282, 58th Congress, 2d Session, pp. 51, 52.

**A number of witnesses produced by Mr. Scrivener in connection with the trial of Lieutenant Massard were sent to Boma in December, 1904. On May 10th, 1905, they had not yet returned to their homes and families. Witnesses sent to Boma from Baringa —1,000 miles away— in August, 1904, did not return until April, 1905, several of the party having died in the interval.

"HE SPOKE OF NOTHING BUT HORRORS"

produce, are there any who can testify to this incident?"

"No I do not know of any. The fact itself I had from M. Dooms.* He received me very hospitably During the whole of the meal we partook of together he spoke of nothing but the horrors he had heard of. Upon my return from the lake I saw M. Dooms again and he gave me the account of the murders committed by Massard or by his orders: shooting the natives as they brought in the rubber, or placing them one behind the other and driving one bullet through the lot.

"I expressed my surprise to Mr. Dooms that he should not have brought to the knowledge of the judicial authorities the facts with which he acquainted me. He replied that it was useless to do so now, and that he would expose them when he got back to Belgium. He also intimated to me his desire to leave the State service, because he did not like having to compel the natives to work beyond their strength. I had been waiting for the revelations of M. Dooms, and when I saw that their appearance was being delayed, I gave publicity to the facts which had been revealed to me."

Seventeen native witnesses were then examined by the Commission. Each testified to murders and massacres committed by white men and their agents.

LULANGA

Station of the Congo Balololo Mission

Mr. Gilchrist's testimony: "They asked me to tell them all I knew about the La Lulanga. They prefaced my remarks by saying, 'Of course you know that this company is in the free trade territory of the State.' They smiled when they said this—and so did I. I gave them instances that showed how free (!) it was. Just a

*M. Dooms was the successor of Lieut. Massard; he told Mr. Scrivener he would denounce Massard's cruelties when he reached home. It was announced later that he had been killed by a hippopotamus.

"COVERED WITH MARKS OF THE CHICOTTE"

few days before I had met a number of men of Bokotola, who, with their neighbors, were living in the forest, with all its discomforts and exposure in a wet season like the present, rather than stay in their own village and be harassed and abused by this company's agents. I informed them also of the sentry regime, with all its cruel accompaniments, and of what Mr. Bond and I had seen on our way from the Ikelemba, of their slave-driving in those towns contiguous to their headquarters at Mompoko. I also told them what we had seen of the desolation in all the districts, of the butcheries wrought by the white men of the State and companies who had from time to time been stationed there. Everywhere the people were compelled to serve the companies in rubber, gum copal or food. At one place two men arrived just as we were leaving with bodies covered with marks of the chicotte given by the trader of Bosci because their quantity was short. . . . Given favorable conditions particularly freedom there would soon be a large population in these interior towns."

Q. "What do you regard as causes of depopulation?

A. "(1) Sleeping Sickness. This has never appeared in epidemic form in our district, only in isolated cases.

"(2) Smallpox. Very few have died of this sickness.

"(3) Unsettled condition of the people. The older people never seem to have confidence to build their houses substantially. If they have any suspicion of the approach of a canoe or steamer with soldiers they flee

"(4) Chest diseases, pneumonia, etc. The people flee to the islands, expose themselves to all kinds of weather, contract chills, which are followed by serious lung troubles, and die. For years we never saw a new house because of the drifting population. They have a great fear of soldiers.

"(5) Want of proper nourishment. I have witnessed

the collecting of the State imposition, and after this was set aside the natives had nothing but leaves to eat.

"(6) Excessive taxes. The 40 hours' work supposed to be given to the State is entirely a misrepresentation of the facts. The collecting of firewood alone occupies more than that time. That is sufficient without any other imposition.

"(7) Another thing that may account for the decreasing population is the constancy of the taxation. This sours the people. They feel they have no interests of their own."

BARINGA

Station of the Congo Balolo Mission

(This Territory is controlled by the A. B. I. R. Concessionaire Society.)

Mr. Harris gives the following account of the hearing at this station:

"Specific atrocities during 1904 were dealt with; then murders and outrages, including cannibalism; then the destruction of the Baringa towns and the partial famine that resulted. Next followed the irregularities during 1903. I drew attention to the administration of M. Forcie, whose regime was a terrible one, including the murder of Isekifasu, the principal Chief of Bolima; the killing, cutting up and eating of his wives, son and children; the decorating of the chief houses with the intestines, liver and heart of some of the killed.

"Following this I came to M. Tagner's time, and stated that no village in the district had escaped murders under this man's regime. Next I spoke of irregularities common to all agents, the public floggings of practically any and everyone; quoting, for instance, seeing with my own eyes six Ngombe men receive one hundred strokes, each delivered simultaneously by two sentries. I referred to the imprisoning of men, women and children, all herded together in one shed, with no arrangement for the demands of nature. I showed

"VERY MANY HAD DIED"

that very many, including even chiefs, had died either in prison or immediately on their release.

"I next spoke of the indiscriminate fines and the taxes imposed even on the food of the people and pointed out that the murders and cannibalism of the sentries were only an exaggeration of their general conduct. Then I spoke of the difficulties faced by the natives in reporting irregularities as they have first to ask permission of the rubber agent. Here I quoted the sickening outrage on Lomako. (The details are unfit for printing.)

"I then pointed out that we firmly believe that but for us these irregularities would never have come to light. The relations that are at present necessary between the A. B. I. R. and the State render it highly improbable that the natives will ever report irregularities. The A. B. I. R. can and do impose on the missionaries all sorts of restrictions if we dare to speak a word about their irregularities. I quoted a few of the many instances which found their climax when Mrs. Harris and I almost lost our lives for daring to oppose the massacres by Van Caelcken. I stated that we could not disconnect the attitude of the State in refusing us fresh sites for missionary work with our action in condemning the administration. We are not allowed to extend the Mission, and, further, we are forbidden to trade even for food, though all this is in clear violation of the Berlin Act. So far as we are aware, until 1904 no single sentry had ever been punished by the State for the many murders committed in this district.

"Sixteen Esanga witnesses were questioned one by one. They gave clearly the details of how father, mother, brother, sister, son or daughter were killed in cold blood for rubber. Then followed the chief of all Bolima, who succeeded Isekifasu (murdered by the A. B. I. R.). He stood boldly* before all, pointed to his twenty witnesses and placed on the table one hundred

*This word becomes pathetic as one thinks of what these natives had suffered from the pitiless power of their oppressors and of what they might suffer after the Commission had gone.

and ten twigs, each twig representing a life for rubber. 'These are chiefs' twigs,' he said, 'these are men's, these shorter are women's, these smaller still are children's.' He said that the White man fought him, and when the fight was over handed him his corpses, and said: 'Now you will bring rubber, won't you?' To this he replied 'Yes.' The corpses were cut up and eaten by M. Forcie's fighters. He told how he had been chicotted and imprisoned, and put to the most menial labor by the agent, of numbers of stolen and ravished wives, and of the many anklets, spears, shields, etc., that he has been forced to give the sentries.

"Bonkoko told how he accompanied the A. B. I. R. sentries when they went to murder Isekifasu and his wives and little ones; of finding them peacefully sitting at their evening meal; of the killing as many as they could, also the cutting up and eating of the bodies of Isekifasu's son and his father's wives; of how they dashed the baby's brains out, cut the body in half, and impaled the halves.

"Again, he told how, on their return, M. Forcie had the sentries chicotted because they had not killed enough of the Bolima people.

"Longoi, of Lotoko, placed eighteen twigs on the table, representing eighteen men, women and children murdered for rubber. Lomboto shows his mutilated wrist and useless hand maimed by the sentry. Isekansu shows the stump of a forearm, telling the same pitiful story. Every witness told of floggings, rape, mutilations, murders, imprisonments and of illegal fines and irregular taxes, etc., etc. The Commission endeavors to get through this slough of iniquity and river of blood, but finding it hopeless, asked how much longer I could go on. I told them I could go on until they were satisfied that hundreds of murders had been committed by the A. B. I. R. in this district alone. I stated that witnesses only awaited my signal to appear by the thousand.

"I further pointed out that we have considered about two hundred murders only from the villages of Bolima,

"FIVE OF SIX SENTRIES ABREAST"

Esanga, Ekerongo, Lotoko; that by far the greater majority still remain. Everyone saw the hopelessness of trying to investigate things fully. To do so, the Commission would have to stay here for months."

Mr. Stannard's testimony: "Not more than a tithe of the witnesses were examined, but that was because the Commissioners considered the charges against the A. B. I. R. fully proved. The Director of the A. B. I. R. had every opportunity of disproving the evidence, but the utmost he could do was to attempt to explain away things and plead ignorance. I said I wished to confirm all Mr. Harris' evidence, except the things that he had actually seen and I had not. I pointed out that we had together drawn up the evidence to be laid before the Commission, so as to avoid repetition.

"Whilst I was stationed at Bongandanga they always had women prisoners, this being part of the ordinary routine of the A. B. I. R.

"Women were imprisoned because the men were short in their supplies. If a certain village or certain villages were short, a number of the women from those places would be seized and put into prison until the men made up their deficiencies.

"I spoke of the method of bringing in rubber workers by sentries. Every fortnight these people were brought in from their villages, distant about thirty to forty miles. Before reaching the A. B. I. R. they had to pass through the Mission Station. In the front came a line of five or six sentries abreast, marching military fashion, with rifles or guns across their shoulders. Following these came a number of prisoners tied neck by neck. After these came the men and boys carrying their rubber, with sentries amongst them at different intervals, and then a number of sentries at the rear hurrying up the stragglers.

"I have seen rubber workers being carried away by their friends from the A. B. I. R. Station after having been severely chicotted.

"When the police officer comes it is usually at the

request of the A. B. I. R. and he is told only their side of this story. He hears nothing about the difficulty the people have in getting rubber and the terrible treatment they have received. The people think he has come to fight them and they either assume a hostile attitude or run away.

"The representative of the Congo Government in the territory distinctly resented our action in reporting outrages connected with the procuring of rubber. The restrictions imposed upon us in the matter of food stuffs, etc., are the direct result of this.

"With reference to taxation, I submitted:

"(1) It is wrong that all the taxes of a large territory should go to the shareholders of a commercial company.

"(2) Whilst it is right that the natives should work, it should be shown them that there is some benefit from working.

"(3) The natives should work principally for their own good, whilst at the same time paying their taxes.

"The native evidence was overwhelming. The witnesses were so numerous that the Commissioners felt it would be a tremendous task to hear them all, and, they did not think it necessary, as they considered the charges more than proved. The Director of the A. B. I. R. was asked what he had to say to these things, and he had to confess that he could not dispute the evidence.

"The witnesses from Esanga told how on one occasion, because forty-nine instead of fifty baskets of rubber were brought in, some of their people were imprisoned, and sentries were sent to punish the people. One poor woman was trying to catch fish in a stream near by her village when she was surprised and shot by rubber sentries.

"Another witness told how he found the corpses of his mother, uncle and sister, killed by the sentries. All had harrowing stories to tell of the brutal murder of near relatives. Some had been shot before their eyes;

"SHOT DOWN INDISCRIMINATELY"

others had fled to the bush to save themselves, and when they returned had found the dead bodies of their relatives lying about.

"Defenceless women and children were shot down indiscriminately, in order to strike terror and fear into the hearts of these unhappy people, so as to force them to bring rubber. This has been the normal condition of these people's lives for years.

"Whilst the men were in the forest trying to get rubber their wives were outraged, ill-treated, and stolen from them by the sentries. Usually the sentries would attack a village either at night or very early in the morning, and in cold blood shoot down the defenceless people who offered no resistance. The history of the A. B. I. R. in these parts is one of oppression, blood and iniquity.

"Lontulu gave a horrible story of massacre, mutilation and cannibalism, crimes committed by those who were acting under the instructions and with the knowledge of white men. At one time, after they had killed a number of people, the cannibalistic fighters attached to the A. B. I. R. force were rationed on the meat thus supplied.

"Inunga of Ekorongo came with his bundle of twigs representing thirty-three people killed by sentries, and when asked why they had been killed replied 'because of rubber.' He mentioned four white men who had sent their sentries to do this dreadful work.

"Boali, a woman of Ekorongo, appeared before the Commissioners, and her maimed body itself was a protest against this iniquitous rubber system. Because she wanted to remain faithful to her husband, who was away collecting rubber, she was shot in the abdomen, receiving an awful wound. She fell down insensible, and the wretches were not yet satisfied for they then hacked off her foot to get the anklet she was wearing.

"Lonboto, her husband, told how they flogged him because he was angry on seeing his wife's mutilated body.

"TERRORIZED BY SENTRIES"

"Bomolo, Chief of Bolumboloko*, said, "There is no rubber in the forest. They search for it, but it is now finished. When they brought what rubber they could get to the station, they were flogged with chicotte, being laid on the ground."

BONGANDANGA

Station of Congo Balolo Mission

Mr. Ruskin's testimony: "I have been ten years upon this station, and during this time I have seen the following things:

"Expeditions of sentries armed with Albini rifles, followed by town people with spears and shields, they in turn followed by women with baskets for loot, etc. M. Peterson has led such expeditions, generally on Sundays.

"Large numbers of women in prison, compelled to work in the sun, some with children at the breast.

"In 1895, I visited the River Bolombo before the A. B. I. R. commenced operations, and found large flourishing towns, people happy, and plenty of food, fowls, goats, etc. In 1901 the change was most noticeable. The natives were terrorized by sentries, and had to live in the forest. In Bosinga and Eala, which were flourishing towns, I could not see a hut.

"In 1899, I saw poles at the A. B. I. R. factory to which four men had been tied, stripped, with heads shaven, for a day and night without water or food. In the morning their eyes were protruding, their features all swollen and they cried for some one to bring a gun and put them out of their misery."

The Commissioners handed to Mr. Ruskin Mr. E. D. Morel's book: "King Leopold's Rule in Africa," and

*Bolumboloko was again raided by A. B. I. R. soldiers in April, 1905.—some months after the visit of the Commission.

"ANXIOUS TO GET RID OF EVIDENCE"

asked him if the things reported there were those he was about to report. If so, it would save fatigue and time if he would confirm them wholesale. Mr. Ruskin read them and, with the exception of one or two typographical errors, confirmed the whole.

"With regard to the system, I have no hesitation in saying that it is iniquitous in the extreme, and if continued will end in the total depopulation of the country. The administration of the system varies with the agent, but the system itself remains the same."

Mr. Gamman's testimony: "After taking the oath I said that as soon as the approach of the Commission was known, the sentries ran into the village and compelled the men to return at once to their own towns. As soon as I knew that the Commission had arrived, I sent to the town to procure witnesses, but they had all gone.

"The Commission asked me if I could account for these things. I replied that it seemed to me that some persons were very anxious to get rid of all who could give evidence.

"The President asked what I thought was the reason of the deaths of those chiefs. I replied, lengthened and repeated confinement in prison, hard work, improper food, and not least, broken heart.

"I cited the murder by sentries in the time of the agent M. Baelde. In Boseki, two sentries named Bolungia and Iseowangala tied up a man named Iseokoko to a tree and demanded from him one thousand rods.* He was only able to supply three hundred, and one or two dogs. This they said was not sufficient. Because the rest was not forthcoming, Bolungia shot him dead. I gave the names of witnesses for this, but they were not called. I also informed the Commission that Bolungia (one of the murderers) is at the present moment a sentry in the employ of the A. B. I. R. here.

"The President then asked me if I had any general statement to make. I thought the rubber tax was ex-

*The native currency.

"FOUR DAYS A MONTH AT HOME"

orbitant. The rubber in the immediate districts was finished; nearly all the villagers had to go two days in the forest for their rubber, work five days there, and then return and bring the rubber to the factory. It was especially hard for those villages far from the factory. We understood that the tax was to be forty hours' work a month. The rubber tax for Nsungamboya was thirteen days in every fifteen days. Thus the people only had four days a month at home. I knew of no village where it took them less than ten days out of the fifteen to satisfy the demands of the A. B. I. R.

"I stated that the greatest iniquity was the power put into the hands of untrained, armed sentries, who so frequently and atrociously abused their position, and were never punished for even the most brutal crimes. As far as I know, not one sentry has ever been severely punished for their abuses of power, their seizing of wives and property, or even murder,—cases which have been proved without any shade of doubt. In reply to a question by the President, I said I did not think it was possible to get in the same amount of rubber without the sentries, because it was excessive, and all power had been taken out of the hands of the chiefs.

"Continuing my evidence next day, I said that I thought I could prove that gross abuses of their position were still perpetrated by the sentries, and also that the sentries were not properly superintended by the A. B. I. R. agents. The women to whom I had referred the day before were tied up by Mbongedza purely for purposes of extortion—it could not have been for rubber, as the husbands were at the time carrying their rubber to Bongandanga. The names of the women were Nsala, Bokali, Ekokula, Botono. This was not even denied by the sentry, and although M. Delvin promised to revoke him, he was only detained one night, and he is at the present moment a sentry at Nsungamboyo.

"The number of women seized by the sentries from Nsungamboyo was almost innumerable. A young man

"A PACKET OF FIFTY LEAVES"

gets the gun, is sentry at Nsungamboyo, and in a few months has quite a number of wives.

"Lokungu, my witness, was then called. He had a piece of string with 42 knots, each knot indicating a person killed at Nsungamboyo. He also had a packet of fifty leaves, each leaf representing women whom he knew had been seized by the sentries; he could give the names of all, and there were many more whose names he could not remember.

"He had seen that day, in walking from our station to the steamer, four of these women in the house of a sentry; one was his own daughter. The names of these four women were Iysovu, Benteke, Bofola, and Boyuka. If a man is sick and cannot possibly go for his rubber, his friends must give a substantial present to the sentry. If a male native down on the list as a rubber collector dies, his friends must do something handsome to get the name taken off the books."

IKAU

Station of Congo Balolo Mission

Mr. Lower's testimony: It was proved that a number of natives anxious to give evidence had been threatened, cruelly treated, and in some cases prevented from going to Ikau by native sentries.

Mr. Lower produced a long list of murders committed in the concession, bringing forward many native witnesses to prove the facts.

The names of sixty men, women and children murdered by Government sentries were given with dates and remarks upon each case.

A few typical instances are here given:

"Sentry demanded deceased's wife. He refused, was bound first and then tied to a post and shot. Corpse untied by Iseofoso, witness."

"Sent to secret prison. Beaten by sentries. Set free. Died one day later. The sentry Iseowaka demanded one thousand rods before permitting relatives to have the body."

"THEY LAID HIM FACE DOWNWARDS"

"Rubber deficient. Imprisoned. "Sentries dug a hole and laid him face downwards in it. They then jumped on him, ramming him with stock of gun until dead. They took the body to the white agent, who, without inquiring the cause of death, told them to take him away and bury him."*

"Bonkongya requested deceased to let him have his daughter. On refusal he sent two sentries, who killed him by hanging."

"The A. B. I. R. agent "Lowoso" sent the sentries. The child Impogni had right hand and left foot and part of foreleg cut off for purpose of getting the ornaments which were on them."

"A woman was shot and her children were hacked with knives."

Testimony of Mr. Charles Padfield: "On 4th December, 1904, when the Commission of Enquiry was expected, the White agents at Boyeka endeavored to bribe the villagers to silence in the matter of atrocities committed upon the people. The villagers, knowing that the Commission of Enquiry was coming, refused to receive the blankets offered them.

"About September of 1904 the White agents at Boyeka sent a sentry to the village of Nkoli to get the rubber. Some of the able-bodied men of the town having died, several villagers went to the White agent, begging that the number of baskets of rubber demanded should be reduced from forty to thirty. This request the White agent refused, and sent the sentry Ekolelo to punish the people if the rubber was not complete. The people were unable to produce the full amount, and thereupon the sentry shot the Chief Bombambo, the charge entering the abdomen on the right side and passing out at the back.

"The son of the murdered Chief, accompanied by an-

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*It should be borne in mind that these soldiers or sentries are themselves flogged and degraded if the rubber is not forthcoming from the villages under their control.

"FIVE BASKETS OF RUBBER SHORT"

other man named Bosolo, took the corpse to the White agent (known to the natives as Ekotolongo) and complained. But he told them that the Chief had been shot because the rubber was not complete, and ordered them to take the corpse back to their town. He called his dog and set it on them, the dog biting the son on the leg as he carried the corpse of his father.

"The town of Inganda had to produce twenty baskets of rubber per fortnight. On one occasion, in 1904, the people had only collected sixteen baskets. The sentry Maboke was sent for the rubber, and finding it short beat a villager so severely with his gun that he died. Lofali and other men carried the corpse to the White man, who said that the man had been killed because the rubber was short.

"Some time later the people of this village were five baskets of rubber short, and the sentry Mambuso caught a villager and took him to the White agent at Boyeka. The White agent thereupon ordered the villager to be chicotted in his presence. The victim of this brutality was then taken to Bassankusu (headquarters of the A. B. I. R. Society), where he was kept five days, after which he was brought back again to Boyeka, again chicotted by the White agent's orders, and sent back to his home. His body was so fearfully lacerated that he died two days later. The villagers, led by the headman, Lofali, took the corpse to the White agent, who told a sentry to thrash Lofali with the chicotte, and today he bears the scars so received.

"The town of Bokenyola has to send ten women on Sunday and forty on other days to work at the factory. On one occasion, when the forty women had been working all day, the White agent Lokoka had the women in the evening all lined up, ordered them to strip themselves naked, and then . . . . (What follows is unfit for printing.)

"Early in 1904 the sentries of the La Lulanga Company were sent to Bolongo for the rubber due from that village. The people had gone to the forest, but had not

"SENTRIES CUT OFF HER RIGHT HAND"

been able to procure the full quantity. As a punishment three villagers were murdered and another wounded. The villagers brought the dead body of one of the murdered persons and also the wounded man to M. Spelier, the director of that society. He accused them of lying, and told them to return to the town.

"About the middle of 1903 the people of the village of Bomengi had started to carry the rubber overland to the factory, when a sentry, Engonda, arrived in a canoe. The people told him that the rubber was on its way, but he refused to believe it, and shot the chief. The white agent Lokoka declined to take any action.

"On another occasion the white agent Lokoka sent messages to the village of Bosokoli to inform the people that they would have to supply double the amount of rubber, adding that if they did not he would punish them. The people could not comply with the demand, and the white agent sent his sentries. They killed two men. The chief complained to the white agent, who said, 'No palaver,' and told the sentries to throw the bodies into the river.

"Some time afterwards the white agent, hearing that the chief was angry, instructed him to bring the rubber in person. When the chief came he was chicotted by order of the white agent, and imprisoned for about four months, during which time he was made to work every day and frequently thrashed.

"In 1903, when the sentry attached to the village of Lobola had gone to the society's factory with the rubber imposition, the village was looted by other sentries. The people having remonstrated, the sentries shot four men, including the village Chief; and pursuing a boy, slashed him across the body and cut off his right hand. Two villagers went to complain to the white agent 'Bomba,' taking with them the corpse of one of the murdered persons. The white agent told them to go away and put the body into the water.

"About the same time the people of this village, when taking their rubber to the white agent Lokoka, were

told by him to bring in addition ten fowls, sending a sentry to see the order carried out. The people objecting, the sentry shot a villager named Maloko. A relative took the corpse to the white agent, but he simply told him to go away.

"In the spring of 1903, while the sentry attached to the village of Busanbongo had gone to Mampoke with the rubber imposition, two other sentries came and looted the village of most of its possessions. Because the people objected, one sentry shot the man Mokembe, while the other sentry shot the man Biacia in the right arm, which today he is unable to use.

"The women at Mampoko had to tread the clay used for brickmaking, and on one occasion the sentries stripped the women, and in the presence of the white man in charge of the work . . . The women went to M. Spelier, the director, and he told them to go away.

"In 1904 the people of the village of Bokutolo received as pay for their rubber, three flat beads. They asked for more pay, as they had not received anything for the last eight times they had brought rubber. For answer, the white agents seized the man Mboyo, and one holding him, another beat him until he died.

"On the third occasion of their bringing in the rubber after the above murder, the white agents gave the people a small mirror. The people asked for money. As answer, the white agents seized the man Bokectu and beat him with the chicotte so severely that he died. The eyewitnesses of these murders, and also of the widows of the men killed, were examined by the Commission of Enquiry."

MONSEMBE

Station of English Baptist Missionary Society

Testimony of Mr. Weeks: "The Commission of Enquiry arrived here on the evening of 6th January, 1905, and at 8.30 A. M. the following day the court assembled and I was summoned to appear before it. The court

house was the deck of a steamer—an ample space between two cabins. The President attended in a scarlet gown with lace bands, Baron Nisco in a black gown with white bands, and the Swiss member in a dress suit. Soldiers were on either side armed with guns, and with bayonets fixed. The court was dignified and impressive.

"After taking the usual oath I was called upon to make my statement. I drew the attention of the Commission to the fact that my attitude towards the State was not the outcome of the present agitation in England, because I had written as far back as the 6th November, 1897, a strong appeal to the Commissaire of the district of Bangala for a reduction of the taxes, as the people were in a state of semi-starvation, and the population was decreasing rapidly. I told them that three officers of the State came and investigated my complaints, found my charges true, but nothing was done to relieve the natives.* They accepted as proved my charges *in re* exhorbitant taxation.

"The next point considered was that of depopulation. In 1890 there were over 7000 people within a certain area, comprising the towns of Bongwele, Moluka, Mantele, Bonjoko, Mokobo, Nkunya I., Nkunya II., Bombala, Monsembe, the Creek towns, Upper and Lower Bombelinga; that the Creek, which had formerly 1500 persons, had now only 67, and that out of the 7000 people in the above towns we last counted 574, and that the State had just taken a census and found only 551, and that in the other parts of the district there is a like decrease. They accepted that as proved.

"I then referred to the killing of twenty-two men, women and children by M. Mazy (Mabata) in the Bokongo section. They said that M. le Juge Grenade had

*Mr. Weeks' long series of disclosures to the Government have had the effect of proving once again how hopeless it is to expect that, on the Congo, adequate punishment, or even punishment at all, will follow crime where white men are concerned, especially Government officials. In one prominent case in which shocking murders were committed by a force under Lieutenant Mazy, that officer was allowed to return to Belgium after the charges made by Mr. Weeks were in the hands of the authorities at Boma.

"AN EASY PREY TO DISEASE"

fully confirmed my accusation and had supplied more details than I had given. Charge proved.

"Then came the question of depopulation through sleep-sickness. I said that on my arrival at San Salvador in 1882 I found the people suffering from sleep-sickness, that the people were not taxed, that they lived under normal conditions, that the birth rate kept pace with the death rate, and that the town had since increased. The first case of sleep-sickness in Monsembe was brought to our knowledge in 1892—two years after our settling in the district—since which time the deaths have increased through semi-starvation and worry. The eternal fortnightly tax depressed the people and made them an easy prey to disease of all kinds.

"We then reached the labor question.

"They asked if it was not necessary to force the natives to work?

"I said, 'No. Look at all the mission stations, steamers, etc.—all built and maintained without the use of forced labor.'

"It had never occurred to them that all our work was done without the employment of forced labor. I called their attention to the industry of some young men within fifty yards of their steamers, who were making chairs and tables; as they were under our protection, and knew they would enjoy the fruits of their labor, they worked hard. Given a guarantee, I said, that the natives would reap the fruits of their toil, and not be cheated out of them; they would work without force. The State could buy its native produce by giving a fair market price, dealing honestly with the natives and winning their confidence.

"I stated my conviction that State trading was the cause of most of the abuses, and that there would be no real reform until the State gave up trading; that the time and energy of the Commission would be wasted unless the State abandons trading. State trading was the curse of the country, and the ruin of the people. The promotion and perquisites of officials depended

largely on the amount of rubber or other produce they collected from their districts. They could not administer the country while taken up with trading.

"In conclusion I said that we came here to teach and preach, and instruct in various ways the natives among whom we live. We are not political agents, and we care not a jot who rules the country so long as we have freedom to do our religious work, and the natives are treated fairly. But when we see them being crushed out of existence, what are we to do? Appeal to the Congo Executive? We have done that, and wasted our time, paper and stamps. What are we to do? Sit quietly, because we are supposed to be in a foreign country? Why, the very stones would cry shame upon us if we were to be silent about the grievances of these people."

A Supplementary Letter

On January 5th, after the Commission had left Baringa, Mr. Harris wrote the President of that body:

"While you were at Baringa, a Chief from Boendo escaped from the sentries guarding his village, and came through the forest in order to lay his case before you, but he experienced such difficulties that he arrived too late to see you, for he found to his keen disappointment that you had gone down river. He had brought with him several eye-witnesses of barbarities, also 182 long twigs and 76 smaller ones, which the Chiefs of his village had sent you, in order to prove that the A. B. I. R. had murdered 182 men and women and 76 children in their village during the last few years. These people were killed by hanging, spearing, cutting the throat, but mostly with the rifle. Some of the women were tortured to death by forcing a pointed stake through the vagina into the womb. I knew of other such instances, but in order to test him I asked him for an example. 'They killed my daughter Nsinga in this manner; I found the

"TOO HORRIBLE FOR REPRODUCTION"

stake in her.' He told me of many other instances of terrible brutality, torture and murder. He further said that since he had left his town a messenger had followed him to say that the A. B. I. R. sentry, Lofela, had clubbed his wife to death with his gun."

Further details of tortures inflicted upon the people are too horrible for reproduction. Mr. Harris give in this letter a long list of murdered people—men, women and children. He concludes:

"This chief said that the reason why he was unable to supply more names of children was because they were too small, many of them being quite babies, who were killed with their mothers. I hope the Commission will be able to find a place in its dossier for this letter."

As to Present Conditions

On January 17th Mr. Harris wrote as follows to the Vice-Governor-General:

Congo Balolo Mission, Baringa,
January 17th, 1905.

To His Excellency the Vice-Governor-General.

Sir,—"I have the honor to acknowledge your Excellency's wish, expressed to me through His Brittannic Majesty's Acting Consul, that we will not delay in informing the authorities of irregularities that we think ought to be known. During the last few months we have done this, but there is yet very much to be told, more than I can ever hope to deal with. I am sending this communication through Commissaire General B—— in order that he may be fully acquainted with the facts.

"I have just returned from a journey inland to the village of Nsongo-Mboyo, the incidents of which have so impressed me that I feel it wise to give you an account.

"In the employ of the Mission is a man who, as a youth, was captured in a native quarrel from this vil-

"THE EMPLOYEE BROKE DOWN AND WEPT"

lage, and, being anxious to know if his relatives were still alive, he has constantly urged this journey upon us. Madame Harris and I left Baringa on January 8th, arriving at Nsongo-Mboyo on January 11th. I had heard much of the plenty and beauty of this village from my man, but arriving there we found nothing but desolation; there was the place where once the village had been; that was all. However, by sending forward scouts, I got to know where the people were, and after pushing on for another three-quarters of an hour, preceded by men shouting that we had not come to fight, I found the old chief and some of his young men; a little later the mother of our employee emerged from the forest. Then, your Excellency, a sight appeared which moved us deeply; the employee, though a grown man, broke down and wept; naturally one would have expected him to show pleasure at seeing his mother. I asked him why he cried. 'Oh, Bondele* how can I be happy! My relatives have all been murdered for rubber; my friends have not a house to live in, or food to eat; my sister, with her right hand and left foot off testifies to the brutality of the sentries.' I had ample proof of this; there was not a house for us to sit in; the people were living in holes in the earth, hollow trunks of trees, and in little grass caves; many lived in the open, with a few leaves for a covering. The chimpanzee is better housed and fed than these people, and in greater safety, too. The old chief said: 'White man, I am full of shame; I cannot give you a fowl to eat yourself, or manioca for your men; I am ruined.' The only present the mother of my employe could give her son was a few leaves for pottage. They had ceased working rubber because they said they could not find it; and even when they took what little they could, the white men only flogged them; they were therefore waiting now, expecting that every day the white man would come again and kill them.

*Mr. Harris' native name.

"CHOPPED IN HALVES WITH A MATCHET"

The abject misery and utter abandon is positively indescribable; though I know of many villages that have suffered, not one that I know of has ever presented such a picture of hopelessness and despair.

"A few months ago, M. Pilaet took his sentries there and between them killed:

"Men—Isekalokuji, Bofofi, Itoko, Ilumbe.

"Women—Imengi, Bofua, Bokangu, Nkawa.

"Children—Mongu, Iyoki, Bomambu.

"The young woman Imenega was tied to a forked tree chopped in halves with a matchet beginning at the left shoulder, chopping down through the chest and abdomen and out at the side. It was in this way the sentries punished the woman's husband.

"Bolumba, another woman, wishing to remain faithful to her husband, had a pointed stake forced into her womb, and as this did not kill her she was shot.

"I found that, as in other towns, enforced public incest formed amusement for the sentries. (The names of victims and relationships are given.)

"After spending some time with the people and hearing their miserable story, also seeing much proof with my own eyes, I made my departure, but before I came away one young chief stepped out and said, 'Tell them (the rubber agents) we cannot and therefore will not find rubber; we are willing to spend our strength at any work possible, but rubber is finished. Our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, have been murdered in scores for rubber; every article of any value has been stolen from us, spears, knives, brasslets, fowls, dogs, etc., and we are now ruined; if we must either be massacred or bring rubber, let them finish us right off, then we suppose they will be satisfied.'

"It was touching to see the old chief as he wrung my hand again and again. 'Oh, Inglesia, don't stay away long; if you do, they will come, I am sure they will come, and then these enfeebled legs will not support me, I cannot run away. I am near my end; try and see to it that they let me die in peace; don't stay away.'

"IN FULL SWING AGAIN"

"I was so moved, your Excellency, at these people's story that I took the liberty of promising them in the name of the Congo Free State, that you will only kill them in future for crimes.

"The following are the names of some of the people murdered by the A. B. I. R. for rubber": (Here follow the names of 38 men, 26 women and 16 children, and of the sentries by whom the murders were committed.)

"I have the honor to be,

"Your Excellency's obedient servant,

"John H. Harris."

On April 7th MR. STANNARD wrote as follows:

"The devil's work is in full swing again. The A. B. I. R. are determined to get their rubber from this district, no matter what it may cost in the shedding of blood and human suffering. The people have been told that very soon the sentries are coming again to kill more, and that if they do not bring in rubber they will soon be 'finished off.' Of course we shall report this to the State, but what is the use? Its action in regard to Van Caelcken's trial does not give much encouragement or hope that any real justice will be done."

August 19th, MR. STANNARD writes again:

"They have also taken away the Chief of Bolumboloko, who was tied by the neck, and Lontulu, the senior Chief of Bolima. These are two of the most respected and influential men in the district and their arrest and deportation are shameful. It is significant that they were two of the principal witnesses before the Commission of Inquiry. . . . Every important witness against the State is the object of the State's disfavor, and as soon as there is the slightest opportunity they are made to suffer.

"The fact is that for a man to speak of these atrocities which should bring shame to any white man's

"SITS IN JUDGMENT UPON HIS VICTIMS"

face, is to make himself a marked man by the State with all that it involves.

"When the Commissioners were here they told us and the Directors of the A. B. I. R. that the A. B. I. R. had absolutely no right to force the people to bring them rubber, and that it was illegal for them to do so, and yet now it is being done by the State itself, whose officers are working openly hand in hand with the A. B. I. R. in this abominable traffic. The Commissioners said that some reforms were imperative and must be introduced immediately. But the reforms are as bad if not worse than the former condition. The Commissioners said that extra judges must come into the district. The Judicial Officer is practically a nobody—he tells us that he cannot do anything; that there are only certain things which come within his province for investigation, and that he has no power to act. The real judge, we are told, who has been granted special power, is Commandant H———, the man who, whilst police officer, was the tool of the A. B. I. R., and who is now helping them with his increased authority to do what the Commission of Enquiry pronounced an illegal thing, viz., force rubber from the natives at the point of the rifle. This is the kind of judge provided on the Congo! In this country the judge joins hands with the law-breakers, the plunderer and the oppressor, and then sits in judgment on his victims. When these are the views and this the attitude of the Executive and Judicial authorities, where is there any room for hope?

* * * * * *

"Lately there arrived in the Congo a M. Rice* who is said to be a very high official and large shareholder of the A. B. I. R., and to whom the greatest deference is shown by State officers. He says the State cannot take

*Spelt "Rice" in Mr. Stannard's letter. From the description apparently M. F. Reiss, described in the official statutes of the A. B. I. R. Society as "Commissaire" of that Society.

"ONLY INTENDED TO DECEIVE THE PUBLIC"

away the charter of the A. B. I. R., and he has also obtained a promise from the Commandant of the District to force the people to work rubber.

"On the 21st July he reached Baringa on an A. B. I. R. steamer, accompanied by M. Delvaux, the Director of the A. B. I. R., and went up the river, their steamer being immediately preceded by another. Shortly after the Director returned down river, and we were informed that M. Rice had remained at Mompona. Then on 11th August the A. B. I. R. steamer again arrived at Baringa with M. Delvaux, en route for the Upper Maringa, accompanied by Commandant H———, with a body of soldiers. The general talk is that he has gone to fight the people and make them bring in more rubber.

"An armed sentry was sent round to the inland villages of this district telling them to work rubber. We are informed by the soldiers here that, on the return of the steamer from up-river, their wives are to be sent down to Bassankusu, and they and their White men are going all round the country hunting the people and forcing them to work rubber. In the light of past rubber-hunting expeditions and all the revelations made before the Commission of Inquiry, I leave you to imagine the scenes of bloodshed and the unspeakable horrors that are now about to be perpetrated upon the unhappy people in the far interior. And all this while the words of the Commissioners are still fresh in the ears of the people, promising them that their sufferings were at an end! It would seem that the Commission of Inquiry was only intended to deceive the public, and give the men out here breathing time in their unholy work. Be it remembered that in this case it is the State itself which is opening this new chapter of horrors for the benefit of the rubber company.

"At one moment it is the company that is the tool of the State, whilst at another time it is vice versa, but

"INTO THE DEPTHS OF THE FOREST"

it is useless to differentiate between them. For all practical purposes they are one and the same.

"A few months ago the Director of the A. B. I. R. said that a Commission was coming to examine the forests, to find out whether there was rubber and to what amount. It has come in the shape of Commandant H——— and his subordinate officers, with their respective companies of soldiers, who are to scour the country, carrying death and destruction in their train, in order to drive the people into the depths of the forest to search for rubber—for that substance which to the people has become synonymous with death. It is piteous to hear the natives plead that the rubber is finished, and ask to be allowed to bring meat or pay their taxes in some other way, but nothing will suffice except rubber. Some time ago there were reports that the State was going to take over the A. B. I. R., but that is no longer spoken of. But it would make no difference, for exactly the same system would remain, and what the State was able to pronounce illegal when done by the A. B. I. R., would be legal when done by themselves."

BOALI

A woman of Ekorongo, shot for resisting outrage and afterward mutilated.

See page 46

IMPONGI

A boy of Illinga mutilated by State Soldiers.

Two Witnesses before the Commission.

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